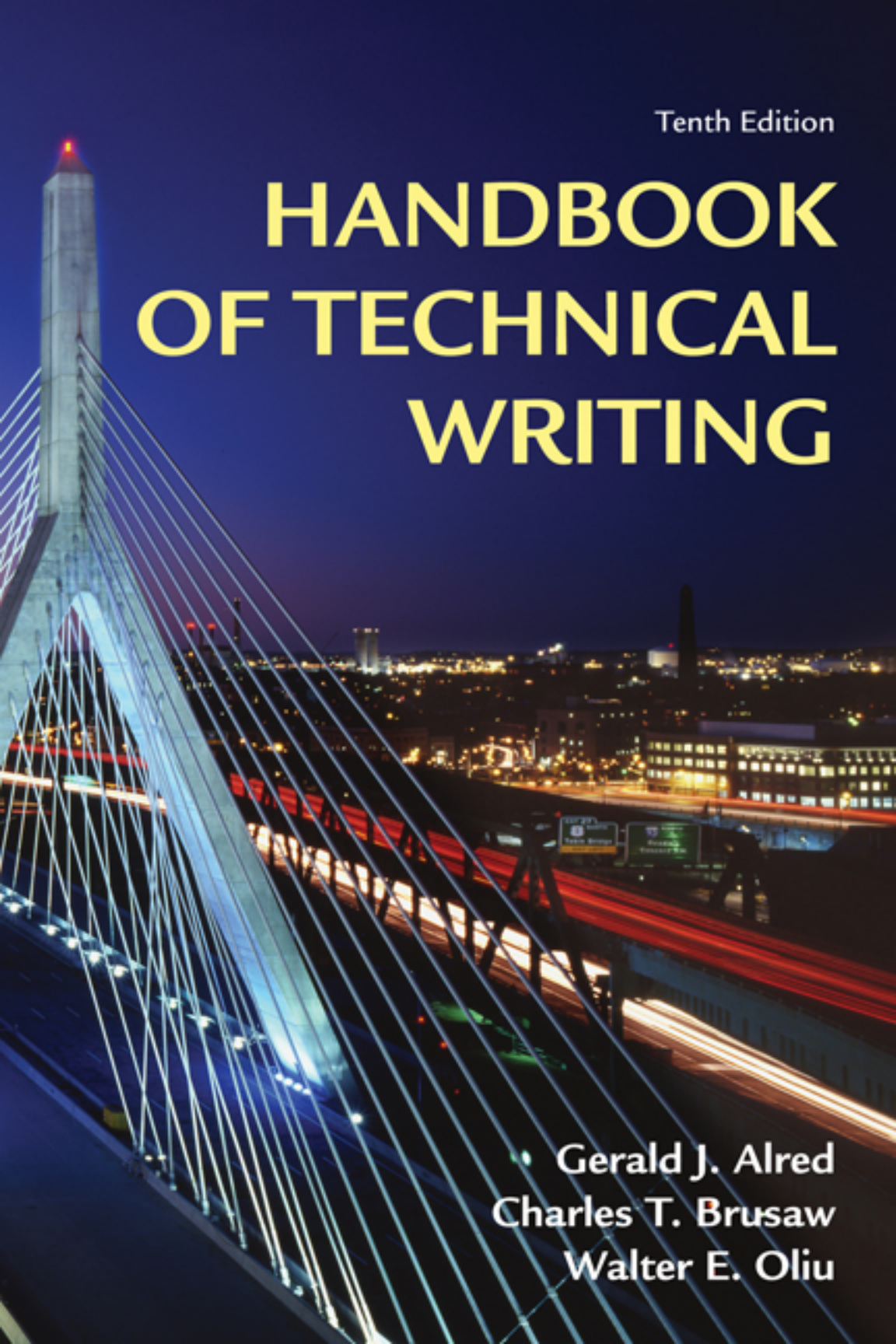
Tenth Edition

HANDBOOK OF TECHNICAL WRITING



Gerald J. Alred
Charles T. Brusaw
Walter E. Oliu

SHOUT
SHARE
IT

Contents by Topic

Use this list as a quick reference for finding entries by topic. To search this book in more detail, see the Index.

Technical Writing Documents and Elements

Brochures 56
Description 123
Environmental Impact Statements 176
FAQs (Frequently Asked Questions) 186
Forms 221
Indexing 260
Instructions 268
Job Descriptions 296
Manuals 332
Mathematical Equations 338
Newsletter Articles 359
Newsletters 361
Process Explanation 422
Proposals 433
  Grant Proposals 238
  Requests for Proposals 439
Questionnaires 457
Report Components
  Abstracts 7
  Appendixes 38
  Conclusions 96
  Executive Summaries 184
  Glossaries 235
  Introductions 287
  Tables of Contents 542
  Titles 553
Reports 474
  Feasibility Reports 188
  Formal Reports 198
  Investigative Reports 292
  Laboratory Reports 310
  Progress and Activity Reports 422
  Test Reports 550
  Trip Reports 563
  Trouble Reports 563
Specifications 534
Trade Journal Articles 556
  Literature Reviews 327
Usability Testing 567
White Papers 586
Writing for the Web 592

Design and Visuals

Layout and Design 312
  Forms 221
  Headers and Footers 251
  Headings 252
  Lists 326
Visuals 576
  Drawings 156
  Flowcharts 195
  Global Graphics 233
  Graphs 243
  Maps 336
  Mathematical Equations 338
  Organizational Charts 380
  Photographs 397
  Tables 542
Web Design 585

Correspondence

Acknowledgment Letters 11
Adjustment Letters 19
Complaint Letters 90
Correspondence 105
Cover Letters (or *Transmittals*) 114
E-mail 164
Inquiries and Responses 263
Instant Messaging 266
International Correspondence 275
Letters 318
Memos 346
Reference Letters 468
Refusal Letters 470
Text Messaging 550

Job Search and Application

Acceptance / Refusal Letters (for Employment) 9
Application Cover Letters 38
Interviewing for a Job 282
Job Search 298
Resignation Letters 487
Résumés 490
Salary Negotiations 512

Presentations and Meetings

Listening 324
Meetings 340
Minutes of Meetings 350
Presentations 412

Research and Documentation

Adapting to New Technologies 13
Bibliographies 52
Brainstorming 55
Copyright 104
Documenting Sources 132
Interviewing for Information 280
Literature Reviews 327
Note-Taking 365
Paraphrasing 390
Plagiarism 401
Questionnaires 457
Quotations 465
Research 479

Organization, Writing, and Revision

Blogs and Forums 53
Collaborative Writing 75
Content Management 100
Description 123
Ethics in Writing 180
Exposition 185
Global Communication 232
Logic Errors 329
Methods of Development 348
- Cause-and-Effect 69
- Chronological 71
- Comparison 87
- Definition 120
- Division-and-Classification 129
- General and Specific 230
- Order-of-Importance 376
- Sequential 530
- Spatial 533

Narration 357
Organization 379
Outlining 380
Persuasion 395
Preparation 409
- Audience 46
- Brainstorming 55
- Context 101
- Purpose 455
- Readers 468
- Scope 514
- Selecting the Medium 515

Proofreading 431
Repurposing 475
Revision 508
Writing a Draft 591

Digital Tips

Assessing Hardware and Software 15
Conducting Online Meetings 342
Creating an Index 262
Creating Styles and Templates 199
Formatting the Résumé 501
Creating an Outline 383
Incorporating Tracked Changes 510
Laying Out a Page 317
Proofreading for Format Consistency 433
Scheduling Meetings Online 341
Sharing Electronic Files 167
Storing Search Results 481
Synchronizing Information 519
Testing Your Web Site 595
Using Collaborative Software 75
Using PDF Files 595
Using Wikis for Collaborative Writing 75

ESL Trouble Spots

Adjectives 15
Agreement 26
Articles 43
Biased Language 50
Clauses 73
Comma Splice 79
Commas 80
Double Negatives 155
English as a Second Language 171
Gender 229
Idioms 258
Mood 354
Nouns 367
Number (Grammar) 369
Numbers 370
Periods 393
Phrases 398
Plagiarism 401
Point of View 405
Possessive Case 407
Prepositions 410
Pronouns 426
Quotation Marks 463
Run-on Sentences 511
Sentence Construction 521
Sentence Fragments 527
Spelling 535
Style 536
Syntax 541
Tense 547
Transition 561
Verbals 570
Verbs 573
Voice 581

ESL Tips

Assigning Gender 229
Avoiding Shifts in Voice, Mood, or Tense 575
Choosing Voice 584
Determining Mood 355
Punctuating Numbers 372
Stating an Opinion 406
Understanding the Requirements of a Sentence 525
Understanding the Subject of a Sentence 522
Using Adjectives 17
Using Articles 43
Using Possessive Pronouns 428
Using the Progressive Form 549

Style and Language

Style 536
- Affectation 25
- Allusions 33
- Ambiguity 35
- Awkwardness 48
- Biased Language 50
- Clarity 71

Style (*continued*)
- Clichés 74
- Comparison 87
- Conciseness 93
- Contractions 103
- Defining Terms 119
- Direct Address 128
- Double Negatives 155
- Emphasis 169
- English, Varieties of 175
- Euphemisms 182
- Expletives 184
- Figures of Speech 192
- Gobbledygook 236
- Idioms 258
- Intensifiers 273
- Jargon 296
- Nominalizations 364
- Pace 385
- Parallel Structure 388
- Point of View 405
- Positive Writing 406
- Repetition 473
- Rhetorical Questions 510
- Sentence Variety 528
- Subordination 538
- Technical Writing Style 544
- Telegraphic Style 546
- Tone 556
- "You" Viewpoint 596

Word Choice 590
- Abstract / Concrete Words 6
- Antonyms 37
- Buzzwords 60
- Connotation / Denotation 99
- Dictionaries 126
- Foreign Words in English 197
- Functional Shift 226
- Malapropisms 332
- Synonyms 540
- Thesaurus 552
- Vague Words 570

Usage

See page 569.

Sentences and Paragraphs

Sentence Construction 521
- Appositives 42
- Clauses 73
- Complements 91
- Expletives 184
- Modifiers 352
- Objects 374
- Phrases 398
- Restrictive and Nonrestrictive Elements 489
- Syntax 541

Sentence Faults 526
- Comma Splice 79
- Dangling Modifiers 116
- Garbled Sentences 228
- Mixed Constructions 351
- Run-on Sentences 511
- Sentence Fragments 527

Paragraphs 385
- Coherence 75
- Transition 561
- Unity 567

Parts of Speech and Grammar

Grammar 237
- Agreement 26
- Case 65
- English as a Second Language 171
- Gender 229
- Mood 354
- Number (Grammar) 369
- Person 394
- Possessive Case 407
- Pronoun Reference 425
- Tense 547
- Voice 581

Parts of Speech 392
- Adjectives 15
- Adverbs 22
- Articles 43
- Conjunctions 98
- Functional Shift 226
- Interjections 274
- Nouns 367
- Prepositions 410
- Pronouns 426
- Verbals 570
- Verbs 573

Punctuation and Mechanics

Mechanics
- Abbreviations 2
- Acronyms and Initialisms 12
- Ampersands 36
- Capitalization 62
- Compound Words 93
- Contractions 103
- Dates 118
- Italics 292
- Numbers 370
- Prefixes 409
- Proofreaders' Marks 430
- Proofreading 431
- Spelling 535
- Suffixes 540

Punctuation 454
- Apostrophes 37
- Brackets 55
- Colons 78
- Commas 80
- Dashes 117
- Ellipses 163
- Exclamation Marks 183
- Hyphens 255
- Parentheses 391
- Periods 393
- Question Marks 456
- Quotation Marks 463
- Semicolons 519
- Slashes 531

This page was intentionally left blank

Handbook of Technical Writing

About the Authors

Gerald J. Alred is Professor Emeritus of English at the University of Wisconsin–Milwaukee, where he teaches courses in the Professional Writing Program. He is the author of numerous scholarly articles and several standard bibliographies on business and technical communication, and he is a founding member of the editorial board of the *Journal of Business and Technical Communication*. He is a recipient of the prestigious Jay R. Gould Award for "profound scholarly and textbook contributions to the teaching of business and technical writing."

Charles T. Brusaw served as a faculty member at NCR Corporation's Management College, where he developed and taught courses in professional writing, editing, and presentation skills for the corporation worldwide. Previously, he worked in advertising, technical writing, public relations, and curriculum development. He has been a communications consultant, an invited speaker at academic conferences, and a teacher of business writing at Sinclair Community College. He is also the author of *Soldat: Reflections of a German Soldier: 1936–1949*.

Walter E. Oliu served as Chief of the Publishing Services Branch at the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, where he managed the agency's printing, graphics, editing, and publishing programs as well as managing daily operations of the agency's public Web site. He has taught at Miami University of Ohio; Slippery Rock State University; and, as an adjunct faculty member, at Montgomery College and George Mason University.

Tenth Edition

Handbook of Technical Writing

Gerald J. Alred

Charles T. Brusaw

Walter E. Oliu

Bedford/St. Martin's

Boston ◆ New York

For Bedford/St. Martin's

Developmental Editor: Kate Mayhew
Production Supervisor: Samuel Jones
Marketing Manager: Molly Parke
Editorial Assistant: Regina Tavani
Project Management: Books By Design, Inc.
Copy Editor: Kathy McQueen
Indexer: Ellen Kuhl Repetto
Permissions Manager: Kalina K. Ingham
Senior Art Director: Anna Palchik
Text Design: Janis Owens, Glenna Collett
Cover Design: Billy Boardman
Cover Art: Zakim Bridge over Charles River. *Photographer:* Peter Vanderwarker. © Getty Images/Peter Vanderwarker
Composition: Achorn International, Inc.
Printing and Binding: RR Donnelley and Sons

President: Joan E. Feinberg
Editorial Director: Denise B. Wydra
Editor in Chief: Karen S. Henry
Director of Marketing: Karen R. Soeltz
Director of Production: Susan W. Brown
Associate Director, Editorial Production: Elise S. Kaiser
Manager, Publishing Services: Andrea Cava

Library of Congress Control Number: 2011933007

Copyright © 2012, 2009, 2006, 2003 by Bedford/St. Martin's

All rights reserved. No part of this book may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording, or otherwise, except as may be expressly permitted by the applicable copyright statutes or in writing by the Publisher.

Manufactured in the United States of America.

6 5 4 3 2 1
f e d c b a

For information, write: Bedford/St. Martin's, 75 Arlington Street, Boston, MA 02116 (617-399-4000)

ISBN: 978-0-312-67945-3 (paperback)
ISBN: 978-1-250-00441-3 (hardcover)

Proudly sourced and uploaded by [StormRG]
Kickass Torrents TPB ET h33t

Acknowledgments

Acknowledgments and copyrights are continued at the back of the book on page 598, which constitute an extension of the copyright page.

Contents

Contents by Topic *inside front cover*

Preface ix

Five Steps to Successful Writing xv

Checklist of the Writing Process xxiii

Handbook of Technical Writing:
Alphabetical Entries 1–597

Index 599

Commonly Misused Words and Phrases 646

Model Documents and
Figures by Topic *inside back cover*

This page was intentionally left blank

Preface

Like previous editions, the tenth edition of the *Handbook of Technical Writing* is a comprehensive, easy-access guide to all aspects of technical communication in the classroom and on the job. It places writing in a real-world context with quick reference to hundreds of technical writing topics and scores of model documents and visuals. Anticipating the needs of today's technical writers and job seekers, the tenth edition has expanded coverage of the job search, offering both students and new professionals relevant and up-to-date advice on securing a position in today's economy and quickly acclimating to the professional environment. This comprehensive reference tool is also accompanied by a robust Web site that works together with the text to offer expanded resources online, including additional model documents and tips.

Helpful Features

The ESL Tips boxes throughout the book offer special advice for multilingual writers. In addition, the Contents by Topic on the inside front cover includes a list of entries—ESL Trouble Spots—that may be of particular interest to nonnative speakers of English.

Digital Tips and Web Links boxes throughout the book direct readers to specific, related resources on the companion Web site. The Digital Tips in the book suggest ways to use technology to simplify complex tasks, such as writing and reviewing documents collaboratively or scheduling and conducting meetings remotely. Expanded Digital Tips on the companion Web site offer step-by-step instructions for completing each task. Web Links in the book point students to related resources on the companion Web site, such as model documents, tutorials, and links to hundreds of useful, related Web sites.

Ethics Notes throughout the text highlight the ethical concerns of today's technical writers and offer advice for dealing with these concerns. A thorough discussion of copyright and plagiarism clarifies what plagiarism is in the digital age and highlights the ethical aspects of using and documenting sources appropriately.

New to This Edition

As mentioned, our focus in revising the *Handbook* for this edition has been the job search. We've provided relevant advice for obtaining a job

in today's economy and for navigating the technologies needed to perform that job effectively. New material advises students on how to network using professional and social media and helps them to successfully prepare for and field difficult questions in professional interviews. Updated samples in print and online and a brand-new section on completing a job-application form provide effective examples and advice for new and experienced applicants, as well as for those changing fields or handling gaps in employment. We have thoroughly updated the entry on documenting sources, providing the most up-to-date guidelines for following APA, MLA, and IEEE styles. We have also made the following additions and improvements:

- **A new entry on adapting to new technology** helps students evaluate and learn how to use new technologies in a constantly evolving workplace context.
- **Professionalism Notes** throughout the text cover professional behavior, guidelines for online and interpersonal communication for both the workplace and the classroom, and tips on preparing for important projects and presentations.
- **A new entry on grant proposals** describes the different components, advises students on how to prepare them, and refers students to useful sites for models and writing tips.
- **Coverage of plain language** helps students communicate clearly even when the topic is complex.
- **New and revamped Digital Tips** throughout the book advise students on relevant skills, including using technologies to schedule and conduct meetings, synchronizing information across different media, and using wikis and other collaborative software to circulate and revise documents.
- **A new user-friendly Index** incorporates the terms that students use most to search for help with writing problems, formatting issues, and communication advice.
- **An updated and all-encompassing Student Site for Alred Handbooks at *bedfordstmartins.com/alred*** features additional free course resources not only for the *Handbook* but also for *The Business Writer's Handbook*, Tenth Edition, and *The Business Writer's Companion*, Sixth Edition. This site allows instructors to take advantage of the texts' potential in face-to-face, online, or hybrid classes by offering lesson plans, handouts, teaching tips, and assignment ideas. For students, the Web site includes additional sample documents, useful tutorials, expanded Digital Tips, and links to hundreds of useful Web sites keyed to the *Handbook*'s main entries.

- **Now available in popular e-book formats.** Students can purchase the *Handbook of Technical Writing* in popular e-book formats for computers, tablets, and e-readers. For details, visit *bedfordstmartins.com/ebooks*.

How to Use This Book

The *Handbook of Technical Writing* is made up of alphabetically organized entries with color tabs. Within each entry, underlined cross-references such as **formal reports** link readers to related entries that contain further information. Many entries present advice and guidelines in the form of convenient Writer's Checklists.

The *Handbook*'s alphabetical organization enables readers to find specific topics quickly and easily; however, readers with general questions will discover several alternate ways to find information in the book and on its companion Web site at *bedfordstmartins.com/alred*.

- **Contents by Topic.** The complete Contents by Topic on the inside front cover groups the alphabetical entries into topic categories. This topical key can help a writer focusing on a specific task or problem browse all related entries; it can also help instructors correlate the *Handbook* with standard textbooks or their own course materials.
- **Commonly Misused Words and Phrases.** The list of Commonly Misused Words and Phrases on pages 646–47 extends the Contents by Topic by listing all the usage entries, which appear in *italics* throughout the book.
- **Model Documents and Figures by Topic.** The topically organized list of model documents and figures on the inside back cover makes it easier to browse the book's most commonly referenced sample documents and visuals to find specific examples of technical communication genres.
- **Checklist of the Writing Process.** The checklist on pages xxiii–xxiv helps readers reference key entries in a sequence useful for planning and carrying out a writing project.
- **Comprehensive Index.** The new user-friendly Index lists all the topics covered in the book — including subtopics and Model Documents — within the main entries in the alphabetical arrangement.

Acknowledgments

For their invaluable comments and suggestions for this edition of *The Handbook of Technical Writing*, we thank the following reviewers who

responded to our questionnaire: Anne Bliss, University of Colorado Boulder; Roger Bourret, South Seattle Community College; Theresa Card, Carlow University; Rachelle S. Gold, North Carolina Central University; Samuel Hanes, University of Maine–Orono; Dorian Harvey, University of Saint Thomas; Dale Jacobson, University of North Dakota; Sara Jameson, Oregon State University; Charles Park, East Stroudsburg University; Alice Philbin, James Madison University; Jon Ramsey, University of California Santa Barbara; Andrew Smith, Piedmont Virginia Community College and Holyoke Community College; Michael Stephans, Bloomsburg University of Pennsylvania; Megan Turnbull, University of New Hampshire; and Voletta Williams, Alcorn State University.

For their helpful reviews of the model documents, we also thank Thomas Bonfiglio, Arizona State University; Anneliese Watt, Rose-Hulman Institute of Technology; Christian Stephens, Oregon Institute of Technology; Lila Harper, Central Washington University; and Daniel Schafer, Washington State University.

For this edition, we owe special thanks to Sally Stanton of Write Now! Consulting, for building a comprehensive and expert new entry on grant writing and for her astute review of the "proposals" section.

We thank Kim Isaacs for continuing to lend her considerable expertise to the job-search sections, as well as Lisa Parker- CPRW, Professional Résumé Presentations, who ably stepped in to update these sections at the eleventh hour.

We are indebted to Kenneth J. Cook, President, Ken Cook Co., for his ongoing support for this and earlier editions and for continued permission to reprint the exemplary company newsletter.

We especially thank Quinn Warnick, St. Edward's University, for developing the new entry "adapting to new technologies" and Richard C. Hay, Founder and CEO of the RiCH Company, for consulting on technology-related issues. Thanks also to Rachel Spilka for her work on both "usability testing" and "adapting to new technologies," and to Ulrike Mueller, SAP AG, for his contributions to social networking and the entry "global communication." We wish to thank Rebekka Andersen for lending her insight and expertise to the task of updating "usability testing." We appreciate the wonderfully attentive work of Ellen Kuhl Repetto, who reinvented and revitalized the Index, and of Mary Ellen Smith, who expertly amended the "documenting sources" entries. In addition, we are very much indebted to the many reviewers and contributors not named here who helped us shape the first nine editions.

We wish to thank Bedford/St. Martin's for supporting this book, especially Joan Feinberg, President, and Karen Henry, Editor in Chief. We are grateful to Andrea Cava, Manager of Publishing Services at Bedford/St. Martin's, and Herb Nolan of Books By Design for their patience and expert guidance. We thank Regina Tavani for her organization and

attention to detail. Finally, we wish to thank Kate Mayhew, our developmental editor at Bedford/St. Martin's, for her expert and patient editorial direction throughout this always challenging project.

We offer heartfelt thanks to Barbara Brusaw for her patience and time spent preparing the manuscript for the first five editions. We also gratefully acknowledge the ongoing contributions of many students and instructors at the University of Wisconsin–Milwaukee. Finally, special thanks go to Janice Alred for her many hours of help in coordination and for continuing to hold everything together.

G. J. A.
C. T. B.
W. E. O.

This page was intentionally left blank

Five Steps to Successful Writing

Successful writing on the job is not the product of inspiration, nor is it merely the spoken word converted to print; it is the result of knowing how to structure information using both text and design to achieve an intended purpose for a clearly defined audience. The best way to ensure that your writing will succeed—whether it is in the form of a memo, a résumé, a proposal, or a Web page—is to approach writing using the following steps:

1. Preparation
2. Research
3. Organization
4. Writing
5. Revision

You will very likely need to follow those steps consciously—even self-consciously—at first. The same is true the first time you use new software, interview a candidate for a job, or chair a committee meeting. With practice, the steps become nearly automatic. That is not to suggest that writing becomes easy. It does not. However, the easiest and most efficient way to write effectively is to do it systematically.

As you master the five steps, keep in mind that they are interrelated and often overlap. For example, your readers' needs and your purpose, which you determine in step 1, will affect decisions you make in subsequent steps. You may also need to retrace steps. When you conduct research, for example, you may realize that you need to revise your initial impression of the document's purpose and audience. Similarly, when you begin to organize, you may discover the need to return to the research step to gather more information.

The time required for each step varies with different writing tasks. When writing an uncomplicated memo, for example, you might follow the first three steps (preparation, research, and organization) by simply listing the points in the order you want to cover them. In such situations, you gather and organize information mentally as you consider your purpose and audience. For a formal report, the first three steps require well-organized research, careful note-taking, and detailed outlining. For a routine e-mail message to a coworker, the first four steps merge as you type the information onto the screen. In short, the five steps expand, contract, and at times must be repeated to fit the complexity or context of the writing task.

Dividing the writing process into steps is especially useful for **collaborative writing**,* in which you typically divide work among team members, keep track of a project, and save time by not duplicating effort. When you collaborate, you can use e-mail to share text and other files, suggest improvements to each other's work, and generally keep everyone informed of your progress as you follow the steps in the writing process.

Preparation

Writing, like most professional tasks, requires solid **preparation**. In fact, adequate preparation is as important as writing a draft. In preparation for writing, your goal is to accomplish the following four major tasks:

- Establish your primary **purpose**.
- Assess your **audience** (or readers) and the **context**.
- Determine the **scope** of your coverage.
- Select the appropriate medium. See **selecting the medium**.

Establishing Your Purpose. To establish your primary purpose, simply ask yourself what you want your readers to know, to believe, or to be able to do after they have finished reading what you have written. Be precise. Often a writer states a purpose in such broad terms that the purpose statement is almost useless. A purpose such as "to report on possible locations for a new research facility" is too general. However, "to compare the relative advantages of Paris, Singapore, and San Francisco as possible locations for a new research facility so that top management can choose the best location" is a purpose statement that can guide you throughout the writing process. In addition to your primary purpose, consider possible secondary purposes for your document. For example, a secondary purpose of the research-facilities report might be to make corporate executive readers aware of the staffing needs of the new facility so that they can ensure its smooth operation in whichever location is selected.

Assessing Your Audience and Context. The next task is to assess your audience. Again, be precise and ask key questions. Who exactly is your reader? Do you have multiple readers? Who needs to see or to use the document? What are your readers' needs in relation to your subject? What are your readers' attitudes about the subject? (Are they skeptical? Supportive? Anxious? Bored?) What do your readers already know about the subject? Should you define basic terminology, or will such

*In this discussion, as elsewhere throughout this book, words and phrases underlined and set in an alternate typeface refer to specific alphabetical entries.

definitions merely bore, or even impede, your readers? Are you communicating with international readers and therefore dealing with issues inherent in **global communication**?

For the research-facilities report, the readers are described as "top management." Who is included in that category? Will one of the people evaluating the report be the human resources manager? If so, that person likely would be interested in the availability of qualified professionals as well as in the presence of training, housing, and perhaps even recreational facilities available to potential employees in each city. The purchasing manager would be concerned about available sources for materials needed by the facility. The marketing manager would give priority to the facility's proximity to the primary markets for its products and services and to the transportation options that are available. The chief financial officer would want to know about land and building costs and about each country's tax structure. The chief executive officer would be interested in all this information and perhaps more. As with this example, many workplace documents have audiences composed of multiple readers. You can accommodate their needs through one of a number of approaches described in the entry **audience**.

In addition to knowing the needs and interests of your readers, learn as much as you can about the context. Simply put, context is the environment or circumstances in which writers produce documents and within which readers interpret their meanings. Everything is written in a context, as illustrated in many entries and examples throughout this book. To determine the effect of context on the research-facilities report, you might ask both specific and general questions about the situation and about your readers' backgrounds: Is this the company's first new facility, or has the company chosen locations for new facilities before? Have the readers visited all three cities? Have they already seen other reports on the three cities? What is the corporate culture in which your readers work, and what are its key values? What specific factors, such as competition, finance, and regulation, are recognized as important within the organization?

ESL TIPS for Considering Audiences

In the United States, **conciseness**, **coherence**, and **clarity** characterize good writing. Make sure readers can follow your writing, and say only what is necessary to communicate your message. Of course, no writing style is inherently better than another, but to be a successful writer in

(*continued*)

ESL TIPS for Considering Audiences (*continued*)

any language, you must understand the cultural values that underlie the language in which you are writing. See also **awkwardness**, **copyright**, **global communication**, **plagiarism**, **plain language**, and **English as a second language**.

Throughout this book we have included ESL Tips boxes like this one with information that may be particularly helpful to nonnative speakers of English. See the Contents by Topic on the inside front cover for listings of ESL Tips and ESL Trouble Spots, entries that may be of particular help to ESL writers.

Determining the Scope. Determining your purpose and assessing your readers and context will help you decide what to include and what not to include in your writing. Those decisions establish the scope of your writing project. If you do not clearly define the scope, you will spend needless hours on research because you will not be sure what kind of information you need or even how much. Given the purpose and audience established for the report on facility locations, the scope would include such information as land and building costs, available labor force, cultural issues, transportation options, and proximity to suppliers. However, it probably would not include the early history of the cities being considered or their climate and geological features, unless those aspects were directly related to your particular business.

Selecting the Medium. Finally, you need to determine the most appropriate medium for communicating your message. Professionals on the job face a wide array of options—from **e-mail**, fax, voice mail, videoconferencing, and Web sites to more traditional means like **letters**, **memos**, **reports**, telephone calls, and face-to-face **meetings**.

The most important considerations in selecting the appropriate medium are the audience and the purpose of the communication. For example, if you need to collaborate with someone to solve a problem or if you need to establish rapport with someone, written exchanges could be far less efficient than a phone call or a face-to-face meeting. However, if you need precise wording or you need to provide a record of a complex message, communicate in writing. If you need to make information that is frequently revised accessible to employees at a large company, the best choice might be to place the information on the company's intranet site. If reviewers need to make handwritten comments on a proposal, you may need to provide paper copies that can be faxed, or you may use word-processing software and insert comments electronically. The comparative advantages and primary characteristics of the most typical

means of communication are discussed in **selecting the medium**. See also **writing for the Web**.

Research

The only way to be sure that you can write about a complex subject is to thoroughly understand it. To do that, you must conduct adequate **research**, whether that means conducting an extensive investigation for a major proposal—through interviewing, library and Internet research, careful **note-taking**, and **documenting sources**—or simply checking a company Web site and jotting down points before you send an e-mail message to a colleague.

Methods of Research. Researchers frequently distinguish between primary and secondary research, depending on the types of sources consulted and the method of gathering information. *Primary research* refers to the gathering of raw data compiled from interviews, direct observation, surveys, experiments, **questionnaires**, and audio and video recordings, for example. In fact, direct observation and hands-on experience are the only ways to obtain certain kinds of information, such as the behavior of people and animals, certain natural phenomena, mechanical processes, and the operation of systems and equipment. *Secondary research* refers to gathering information that has been analyzed, assessed, evaluated, compiled, or otherwise organized into accessible form. Such forms or sources include books, articles, reports, Web documents, e-mail discussions, and brochures. Use the methods most appropriate to your needs, recognizing that some projects may require several types of research and that collaborative projects may require those research tasks to be distributed among team members.

Sources of Information. As you conduct research, numerous sources of information are available to you:

- Your own knowledge and that of your colleagues
- The knowledge of people outside your workplace, gathered through **interviewing for information**
- Internet sources, including Web sites, directories, archives, and discussion groups
- Library resources, including databases and indexes of articles as well as books and reference works
- Printed and electronic sources in the workplace, such as brochures, memos, e-mail, and Web documents

Consider all sources of information when you begin your research and use those that are appropriate and useful. The amount of research you will need to do depends on the scope of your project.

Organization

Without organization, the material gathered during your research will be incoherent to your readers. To organize information effectively, you need to determine the best way to structure your ideas; that is, you must choose a primary **method of development**.

Methods of Development. An appropriate method of development is the writer's tool for keeping information under control and the readers' means of following the writer's presentation. As you analyze the information you have gathered, choose the method that best suits your subject, your readers' needs, and your purpose. For example, if you were writing instructions for assembling office equipment, you would naturally present the steps of the process in the order readers should perform them: the **sequential method of development**. If you were writing about the history of an organization, your account would most naturally go from the beginning to the present: the **chronological method of development**. If your subject naturally lends itself to a certain method of development, use it—do not attempt to impose another method on it.

Often you will need to combine methods of development. For example, a persuasive brochure for a charitable organization might combine a specific-to-general method of development with a **cause-and-effect method of development**. That is, you could begin with persuasive case histories of individual people in need and then move to general information about the positive effects of donations on recipients.

Outlining. Once you have chosen a method of development, you are ready to prepare an outline. **Outlining** breaks large or complex subjects into manageable parts. It also enables you to emphasize key points by placing them in the positions of greatest importance. By structuring your thinking at an early stage, a well-developed outline ensures that your document will be complete and logically organized, allowing you to focus exclusively on writing when you begin the rough draft. An outline can be especially helpful for maintaining a collaborative writing team's focus throughout a large project. However, even a short letter or memo needs the logic and structure that an outline provides, whether the outline exists in your mind, on-screen, or on paper.

At this point, you must begin to consider **layout and design** elements that will be helpful to your readers and appropriate to your subject and purpose. For example, if **visuals** such as photographs or tables will be useful, this is a good time to think about where they may be deployed and what kinds of visual elements will be effective, especially if they need to be prepared by someone else while you are writing and revising

the draft. The outline can also suggest where **headings**, **lists**, and other special design features may be useful.

Writing

When you have established your purpose, your readers' needs, and your scope, and you have completed your research and your outline, you will be well prepared to write a first draft. Expand your outline into **paragraphs**, without worrying about **grammar**, refinements of language **usage**, or **punctuation**. Writing and revising are different activities; refinements come with **revision**.

Write the rough draft, concentrating entirely on converting your outline into sentences and paragraphs. You might try writing as though you were explaining your subject to a reader sitting across from you. Do not worry about a good opening. Just start. Do not be concerned in the rough draft about exact **word choice** unless it comes quickly and easily—concentrate instead on ideas.

Even with good preparation, writing the draft remains a chore for many writers. The most effective way to get started and keep going is to use your outline as a map for your first draft. Do not wait for inspiration—you need to treat writing a draft as you would any on-the-job task. The entry **writing a draft** describes tactics used by experienced writers—discover which ones are best suited to you and your task.

Consider writing the **introduction** last because then you will know more precisely what is in the body of the draft. Your opening should announce the subject and give readers essential background information, such as the document's primary purpose. For longer documents, an introduction should serve as a frame into which readers can fit the detailed information that follows.

Finally, you will need to write a **conclusion** that ties the main ideas together and emphatically makes a final significant point. The final point may be to recommend a course of action, make a prediction or a judgment, or merely summarize your main points—the way you conclude depends on the purpose of your writing and your readers' needs.

Revision

The clearer a finished piece of writing seems to the reader, the more effort the writer has likely put into its **revision**. If you have followed the steps of the writing process to this point, you will have a rough draft that needs to be revised. Revising, however, requires a different frame of mind than does writing the draft. During revision, be eager to find and correct faults and be honest. Be hard on yourself for the benefit of your readers. Read and evaluate the draft as if you were a reader seeing it for the first time.

Check your draft for accuracy, completeness, and effectiveness in achieving your purpose and meeting your readers' needs and expectations. Trim extraneous information: Your writing should give readers exactly what they need, but it should not burden them with unnecessary information or sidetrack them into loosely related subjects.

Do not try to revise for everything at once. Read your rough draft several times, each time looking for and correcting a different set of problems or errors. Concentrate first on larger issues, such as **unity** and **coherence**; save mechanical corrections, like **spelling** and punctuation, for later **proofreading**. See also **ethics in writing**.

Finally, for important documents, consider having others review your writing and make suggestions for improvement. For collaborative writing, of course, team members must review each other's work on segments of the document as well as the final master draft. Use the Checklist of the Writing Process on pages xxiii–xxiv to guide you not only as you revise but also throughout the writing process.

WEB LINK	Style Guides and Standards
Organizations and professional associations often follow such guides as *The Chicago Manual of Style*, *MLA Style Manual and Guide to Scholarly Publishing*, and *United States Government Printing Office Style Manual* to ensure consistency in their publications on issues of usage, format, and documentation. Because advice in such guides often varies, some organizations set their own standards for documents. Where such standards or specific style guides are recommended or required by regulations or policies, you should follow those style guidelines. For a selected list of style guides and standards, see ***bedfordstmartins.com/alred*** and select *Links for Handbook Entries*.	

Checklist of the Writing Process

This checklist arranges key entries of the *Handbook of Technical Writing* according to the sequence presented in Five Steps to Successful Writing, which begins on page xv. This checklist is useful both for following the steps and for diagnosing writing problems.

Preparation 412

- ✔ Establish your **purpose** 455
- ✔ Identify your **audience** or **readers** 46, 468
- ✔ Consider the **context** 101
- ✔ Determine your **scope** of coverage 514
- ✔ **Select the medium** 515

Research 479

- ✔ **Brainstorm** to determine what you already know 55
- ✔ Conduct **research** 479
- ✔ Take notes (**note-taking**) 365
- ✔ **Interview for information** 280
- ✔ Create and use **questionnaires** 457
- ✔ Avoid **plagiarism** 401
- ✔ **Document sources** 132

Organization 379

- ✔ Choose the best **methods of development** 348
- ✔ **Outline** your notes and ideas 380
- ✔ Develop and integrate **visuals** 576
- ✔ Consider **layout and design** 312

  logic errors 329

  positive writing 406

  voice 581
- ✔ Check for **ethics in writing** 180

  biased language 50

  copyright 104

  plagiarism 401
- ✔ Check for appropriate **word choice** 590

  abstract / concrete words 6

  affectation, **jargon**, and **plain language** 25, 296, 403

  clichés 74

  connotation / denotation 99

  defining terms 119
- ✔ Eliminate problems with **grammar** 237

Writing a Draft 591

- ✔ Select an appropriate **point of view** 405
- ✔ Adopt an appropriate **style** and **tone** 535, 556
- ✔ Use effective **sentence construction** 521

- ✔ Construct effective **paragraphs** 385
- ✔ Use **quotations** and **paraphrasing** 465, 390
- ✔ Write an **introduction** 287
- ✔ Write a **conclusion** 96
- ✔ Choose a **title** 553

Revision **508**

- ✔ Check for **unity** and **coherence** 567, 75
  - **conciseness** 93
  - **pace** 385
  - **transition** 561
- ✔ Check for **sentence variety** 528
  - **emphasis** 169
  - **parallel structure** 388
  - **subordination** 538
- ✔ Check for **clarity** 71
  - **agreement** 26
  - **ambiguity** 35
  - **awkwardness** 48
  - **case** 65
  - **modifiers** 352
  - **pronoun reference** 425
  - **sentence faults** 526
- ✔ Review mechanics and **punctuation** 454
  - **abbreviations** 2
  - **capitalization** 62
  - **contractions** 103
  - **dates** 118
  - **italics** 292
  - **numbers** 370
  - **proofreading** 431
  - **spelling** 535

A

a / an

A and *an* are indefinite **articles** because the **noun** designated by the article is not a specific person, place, or thing but is one of a group.

- She installed *a* program.
  [This is not a specific program but an unnamed program.]

Use *a* before words or abbreviations beginning with a consonant or consonant sound, including *y* or *w*.

- *A* manual is available online.
- It was *a* historic event for the Institute.
  [*Historic* begins with the consonant *h*.]
- We received *a* DNA sample.
- The year's activities are summarized in *a* one-page report.
  [*One* begins with the consonant sound "wuh."]

Use *an* before words or abbreviations beginning with a vowel or a consonant with a vowel sound.

- The report is *an* overview of the year's activities.
- The applicant arrived *an* hour early.
  [*Hour* begins with a silent *h*.]
- She bought *an* SLR digital camera.
  [*SLR* begins with a vowel sound "ess."]

Do not use unnecessary indefinite articles in a sentence.

- Fill with *a* half *a* pint of fluid.
  [Choose one article and eliminate the other.]

See also **adjectives**.

a lot

A lot is often incorrectly written as one word (*alot*). The phrase *a lot* is informal and normally should not be used in technical writing. Use *many* or *numerous* for estimates or give a specific number or amount.

- We received ~~a lot of~~ *many* e-mails supporting the new policy.

abbreviations

DIRECTORY

Using Abbreviations 2
Writer's Checklist: Using Abbreviations 3
Forming Abbreviations 3
Names of Organizations 3
Measurements 4
Personal Names and Titles 4
Common Scholarly Abbreviations 5

Abbreviations are shortened versions of words or combinations of the first letters of words (*Corp./Corporation*, *URL/Uniform Resource Locator*). Abbreviations, if used appropriately, can be convenient for both the reader and the writer. Like symbols, they can be important space savers in technical writing.

Abbreviations that are formed by combining the initial letter of each word in a multiword term are called *initialisms*. Initialisms are pronounced as separate letters (*AC* or *ac/alternating current*). Abbreviations that combine the first letter or letters of several words—and can be pronounced—are called *acronyms* (*PIN/personal identification number*, *laser/light amplification by stimulated emission of radiation*).

Using Abbreviations

In business, industry, and government, specialists and those working together on particular projects often use abbreviations. The most important consideration in the use of abbreviations is whether they will be understood by your **audience**. The same abbreviation, for example, can have two different meanings (STC stands for both the Society for Technical Communication and the Science and Technology Corporation). Like **jargon**, shortened forms are easily understood within a group of specialists; outside the group, however, shortened forms might be incomprehensible. In fact, abbreviations can be easily overused, either as

an **affectation** or in a misguided attempt to make writing concise, even with **instant messaging** where abbreviations are often used. Remember that **memos**, **e-mail**, or **reports** addressed to specific people may be read by other people—you must consider those secondary audiences as well. A good rule to follow is "when in doubt, spell it out."

WRITER'S CHECKLIST **Using Abbreviations**

- ✔ Except for commonly used abbreviations (*U.S.*, *a.m.*), spell out a term to be abbreviated the first time it is used, followed by the abbreviation in parentheses. Thereafter, the abbreviation may be used alone.
- ✔ In long documents, repeat the full term in parentheses after the abbreviation at regular intervals to remind readers of the abbreviation's meaning, as in "Remember to submit the CAR (Capital Appropriations Request) by October 15."
- ✔ Do not add an additional period at the end of a sentence that ends with an abbreviation. ("The official name of the company is DataBase, Inc.")
- ✔ For abbreviations specific to your profession or discipline, use a style guide recommended by your professional organization or company. (See the Web Link at the end of the **documenting sources**.)
- ✔ Write acronyms in capital letters without periods. The only exceptions are acronyms that have become accepted as common nouns, which are written in lowercase letters, such as *scuba* (self-contained *u*nderwater *b*reathing *a*pparatus).
- ✔ Generally, use periods for lowercase initialisms (*a.k.a.*, *e.d.p.*, *p.m.*) but not for uppercase ones (*GDP*, *IRA*, *UFO*). Exceptions include geographic names (*U.S.*, *U.K.*, *E.U.*) and the traditional expression of academic degrees (*B.A.*, *M.S.E.E.*, *Ph.D.*).
- ✔ Form the plural of an acronym or initialism by adding a lowercase *s*. Do not use an **apostrophe** (*CARs*, *DVDs*).
- ✔ Do not follow an abbreviation with a word that repeats the final term in the abbreviation (*HIV transmission* not *HIV virus transmission*).
- ✔ Do not make up your own abbreviations; they will confuse readers.

Forming Abbreviations

Names of Organizations. A company may include in its name a term such as *Brothers*, *Incorporated*, *Corporation*, *Company*, or *Limited Liability Company*. If the term is abbreviated in the official company name that appears on letterhead stationery or on its Web site, use the

abbreviated form: *Bros.*, *Inc.*, *Corp.*, *Co.*, or *LLC*. If the term is not abbreviated in the official name, spell it out in writing, except with addresses, footnotes, **bibliographies**, and **lists** where abbreviations may be used. Likewise, use an **ampersand** (&) only if it appears in the official company name. For names of divisions within organizations, terms such as *Department* and *Division* should be abbreviated only when space is limited (*Dept.* and *Div.*).

Measurements. Except for abbreviations that may be confused with words (*in.* for *inch* and *gal.* for *gallon*), abbreviations of measurement do not require periods (*yd* for *yard* and *qt* for *quart*). Abbreviations of units of measure are identical in the singular and plural: *1 cm* and *15 cm* (not *15 cms*). Some abbreviations can be used in combination with other symbols (*°F* for *degrees Fahrenheit* and ft^2 for *square feet*).

The following list includes abbreviations for the basic units of the International System of Units (SI), the metric system. This system not only is used in science but also is used in international commerce and trade.

MEASUREMENT	UNIT	ABBREVIATION
length	meter	m
mass	kilogram	kg
time	second	s
electric current	ampere	A
thermodynamic temperature	kelvin	K
amount of substance	mole	mol
luminous intensity	candela	cd

For additional definitions and background, see the National Institute of Standards and Technology Web site at *http://physics.nist.gov/cuu/Units/units.html*. For information on abbreviating dates and time, see **numbers**.

Personal Names and Titles. Personal names generally should not be abbreviated: *Thomas* (not *Thos.*) and *William* (not *Wm.*). An academic, civil, religious, or military title should be spelled out and in lowercase when it does not precede a name. ("The *captain* wanted to check the orders.") When they precede names, some titles are customarily abbreviated (*Dr. Smith*, *Mr. Mills*, *Ms. Katz*). See also **Ms. / Miss / Mrs.**

An abbreviation of a title may follow the name; however, be certain that it does not duplicate a title before the name (*Angeline Martinez, Ph.D.* or *Dr. Angeline Martinez*). When addressing **correspondence** and including names in other documents, you normally should spell out titles (*The Honorable Mary J. Holt*; *Professor Charles Matlin*). Traditionally,

periods are used with academic degrees, although *The Chicago Manual of Style* suggests omitting these (*M.A./MA*, *M.B.A./MBA*, *Ph.D./PhD*).

Common Scholarly Abbreviations and Terms. The following is a partial list of abbreviations commonly used in reference books and for documenting sources in research papers and reports. Other than in formal scholarly work, generally avoid such abbreviations.

anon.	anonymous
bibliog.	bibliography, bibliographer, bibliographic
ca., c.	*circa*, "about" (used with approximate dates: *ca. 1756*)
cf.	*confer*, "compare"
chap.	chapter
diss.	dissertation
ed., eds.	edited by, editor(s), edition(s)
e.g.	*exempli gratia*, "for example" (see e.g. / i.e.)
esp.	especially
et al.	*et alii*, "and others"
etc.	*et cetera*, "and so forth" (see etc.)
ff.	and the following page(s) or line(s)
GPO	Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C.
i.e.	*id est*, "that is"
MS, MSS	manuscript, manuscripts
n., nn.	note, notes (used immediately after page number: *56n., 56n.3, 56nn.3–5*)
N.B., n.b.	*nota bene*, "take notice, mark well"
n.d.	no date (of publication)
n.p.	no place (of publication); no publisher; no page
p., pp.	page, pages
proc.	proceedings
pub.	published by, publisher, publication
rev.	revised by, revised, revision; review, reviewed by (Spell out "review" where "rev." might be ambiguous.)
rpt.	reprinted by, reprint
sec., secs.	section, sections
sic	so, thus; inserted in brackets ([*sic*]) after a misspelled or wrongly used word in quotations
supp., suppl.	supplement
trans.	translated by, translator, translation
UP	University Press (used in MLA style, as in *Oxford UP*)
viz.	*videlicet*, "namely"
vol., vols.	volume, volumes
vs., v.	*versus*, "against" (*v.* preferred in titles of legal cases)

WEB LINK	Using Abbreviations
For links to Web sites specifying standard abbreviations and acronyms, including U.S. Postal Service abbreviations, see ***bedfordstmartins.com/alred*** and select *Links for Handbook Entries*.	

above

Avoid using *above* to refer to a preceding passage or **visual** because its reference is vague and often an **affectation**. The same is true of *aforesaid* and *aforementioned*. (See also **former / latter**.) To refer to something previously mentioned, repeat the **noun** or **pronoun**, or construct your **paragraph** so that your reference is obvious.

- Please complete and submit ~~the above~~ *your travel voucher* by March 1.

absolutely

Absolutely means "definitely," "entirely," "completely," or "unquestionably." Avoid it as a redundant **intensifier** to mean "very" or "much."

- We are ~~absolutely~~ certain we can meet the deadline.

abstract / concrete words

Abstract words refer to general ideas, qualities, conditions, acts, or relationships—intangible things that cannot be detected by the five senses (sight, hearing, touch, taste, and smell), such as *learning*, *leadership*, and *technology*. *Concrete words* identify things that can be perceived by the five senses, such as *diploma*, *manager*, and *keyboard*.

Abstract words must frequently be further defined or described.

- The accident-investigation team needs freedom *to interview the maintenance technicians*.

Abstract words are best used with concrete words to help make intangible concepts specific and vivid.

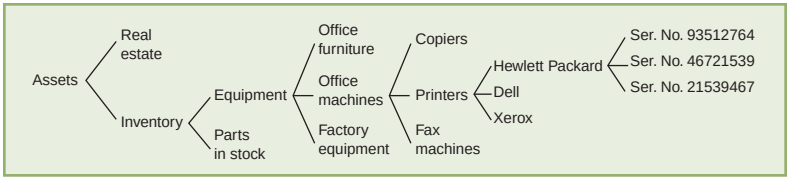


FIGURE A–1. Abstract-to-Concrete Words

- *Transportation* [abstract] was limited to *buses* [concrete] and *commuter trains* [concrete].

The example in Figure A–1 represents seven levels of abstraction from most abstract to most concrete; the appropriate level depends on your **purpose** in writing and on the **context** in which you are using the word. See also **word choice**.

abstracts

An abstract summarizes and highlights the major points of a **formal report**, **trade journal article**, dissertation, or other long work. Its primary purpose is to enable readers to decide whether to read the work in full. For a discussion of how summaries differ from abstracts, see **executive summaries**.

Although abstracts, typically 200 to 250 words long, are published with the longer works they condense, they can also be published separately in periodical indexes and by abstracting services (see **research**). For this reason, an abstract must be readable apart from the original document.

Types of Abstracts

Depending on the kind of information they contain, abstracts are often classified as descriptive or informative. A *descriptive abstract* summarizes the **purpose**, **scope**, and methods used to arrive at the reported findings. It is a slightly expanded **table of contents** in sentence and paragraph form. A descriptive abstract need not be longer than several sentences. An *informative abstract* is an expanded version of the descriptive abstract. In addition to information about the purpose, scope, and research methods used, the informative abstract summarizes any results, **conclusions**, and recommendations. The informative abstract retains the **tone** and essential scope of the original work, omitting its details. The first four sentences of the abstract shown in Figure A–2

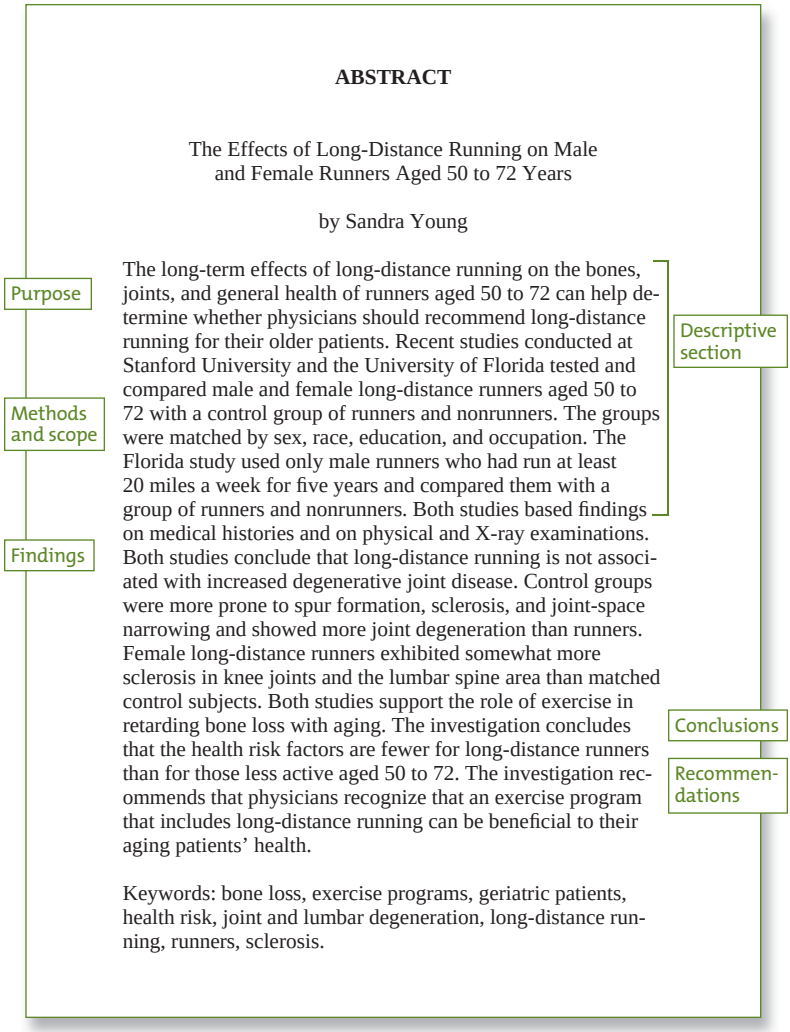

ABSTRACT
The Effects of Long-Distance Running on Male and Female Runners Aged 50 to 72 Years
by Sandra Young
Purpose
Methods and scope
Findings
The long-term effects of long-distance running on the bones, joints, and general health of runners aged 50 to 72 can help determine whether physicians should recommend long-distance running for their older patients. Recent studies conducted at Stanford University and the University of Florida tested and compared male and female long-distance runners aged 50 to 72 with a control group of runners and nonrunners. The groups were matched by sex, race, education, and occupation. The Florida study used only male runners who had run at least 20 miles a week for five years and compared them with a group of runners and nonrunners. Both studies based findings on medical histories and on physical and X-ray examinations. Both studies conclude that long-distance running is not associated with increased degenerative joint disease. Control groups were more prone to spur formation, sclerosis, and joint-space narrowing and showed more joint degeneration than runners. Female long-distance runners exhibited somewhat more sclerosis in knee joints and the lumbar spine area than matched control subjects. Both studies support the role of exercise in retarding bone loss with aging. The investigation concludes that the health risk factors are fewer for long-distance runners than for those less active aged 50 to 72. The investigation recommends that physicians recognize that an exercise program that includes long-distance running can be beneficial to their aging patients' health.
Descriptive section
Conclusions
Recommendations
Keywords: bone loss, exercise programs, geriatric patients, health risk, joint and lumbar degeneration, long-distance running, runners, sclerosis.

FIGURE A–2. Informative Abstract (for an Article)

alone would be descriptive; with the addition of the sentences that detail the conclusions of the report, the abstract becomes informative.

The type of abstract you should write depends on your **audience** and the organization or publication for which you are writing. Informative abstracts work best for wide audiences that need to know conclusions and recommendations; descriptive abstracts work best for compilations,

such as proceedings and progress reports that do not contain conclusions or recommendations.

Writing Strategies

Write the abstract *after* finishing the report or document. Otherwise, the abstract may not accurately reflect the longer work. Begin with a topic sentence that announces the subject and scope of your original document. Then, using the major and minor headings of your outline or table of contents to distinguish primary ideas from secondary ones, decide what material is relevant to your abstract. (See **outlining**.) Write with **clarity** and **conciseness**, eliminating unnecessary words and ideas. Do not, however, become so terse that you omit articles (*a*, *an*, *the*) and important transitional words and phrases (*however*, *therefore*, *but*, *next*). Write complete sentences, but avoid stringing together a group of short sentences end to end; instead, combine ideas by using **subordination** and **parallel structure**. Spell out all but the most common **abbreviations**. In a report, an abstract follows the title page and is numbered page iii.

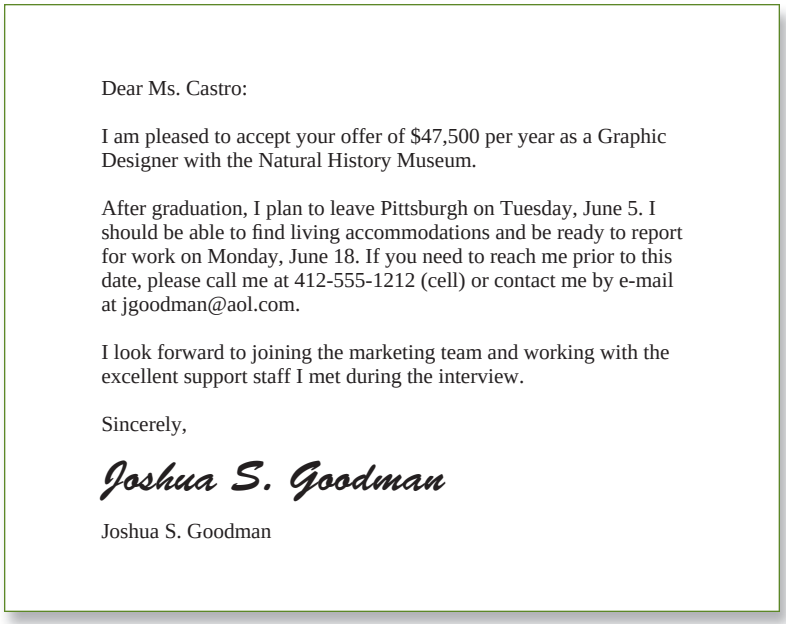
accept / except

Accept is a **verb** meaning "consent to," "agree to take," or "admit willingly." ("I *accept* the responsibility.") *Except* is normally used as a preposition meaning "other than" or "excluding." ("We agreed on everything *except* the schedule.")

acceptance / refusal letters (for employment)

When you decide to accept a job offer, you can notify your new employer by telephone or in a meeting—but to make your decision official, you need to send an acceptance in writing. What you include in your message and whether you send a **letter** or an **e-mail** depends on your previous conversations with your new employer. See also **correspondence**. Figure A–3 shows an example of a job acceptance letter written by a graduating student with substantial experience. (See his **résumé** in Figure R–7 on page 495.)

Note that in the first paragraph of Figure A–3, the writer identifies the job he is accepting and the salary he has been offered—doing so can avoid any misunderstandings about the job or the salary. In the second paragraph, the writer details his plans for relocating and reporting



Dear Ms. Castro:

I am pleased to accept your offer of $47,500 per year as a Graphic Designer with the Natural History Museum.

After graduation, I plan to leave Pittsburgh on Tuesday, June 5. I should be able to find living accommodations and be ready to report for work on Monday, June 18. If you need to reach me prior to this date, please call me at 412-555-1212 (cell) or contact me by e-mail at jgoodman@aol.com.

I look forward to joining the marketing team and working with the excellent support staff I met during the interview.

Sincerely,

Joshua S. Goodman

Joshua S. Goodman

FIGURE A–3. Acceptance Letter (for Employment)

for work. Even if the writer discussed these arrangements during earlier conversations, he needs to confirm them, officially, in this written message. The writer concludes with a brief but enthusiastic statement that he looks forward to working for the new employer.

When you decide to reject a job offer, send a written job refusal to make that decision official, even if you have already notified the employer during a meeting or on the phone. Writing to an employer is an important goodwill gesture.

In Figure A–4, an example of a job refusal, the applicant mentions something positive about his contact with the employer and refers to the specific job offered. He indicates his serious consideration of the offer, provides a logical reason for the refusal, and concludes on a pleasant note. (See his résumé in Figure R–8 on page 496.) For further advice on handling refusals and negative messages generally, see **refusal letters**.

◖ PROFESSIONALISM NOTE Be especially tactful and courteous—the employer you are refusing has spent time and effort interviewing you and may have counted on your accepting the job. Remember, you may apply for another job at that company in the future. ◗

Dear Mr. Vallone:

I enjoyed talking with you about your opening for a manager of aerospace production at your Rockford facility, and I seriously considered your generous offer.

After giving the offer careful thought, however, I have decided to accept a management position with a research-and-development firm. I feel that the job I have chosen is better suited to my long-term goals.

I appreciate your consideration and the time you spent with me. I wish you success in filling the position.

Sincerely,

Robert Mandillo

Robert Mandillo

FIGURE A–4. Refusal Letter (for Employment)

accuracy / precision

Accuracy means error-free and correct. *Precision*, mathematically, refers to the "degree of refinement with which a measurement is made." Thus, a measurement carried to five decimal places (*5.28371*) is more precise than one carried to two decimal places (*5.28*), but it is not necessarily more accurate.

acknowledgment letters

When a colleague or client sends you something or makes a request, you should acknowledge what was sent, respond to the request, or note that you cannot respond to the request immediately in a short, polite note. The message shown in Figure A–5 could be sent as a **letter** or an **e-mail**. See also **correspondence**.

Dear Mr. Evans:

I received your comprehensive report today. When I finish studying it in detail, I'll send you our cost estimate for the installation of the ECAT 1240 PET Scanner.

Thank you for preparing such a thorough analysis.

Regards,

Roger Vonblatz

FIGURE A–5. Acknowledgment

acronyms and initialisms

Acronyms are formed by combining the first letter or letters of several words; they are pronounced as words and written without periods (*ANSI*/*American National Standards Institute*). *Initialisms* are formed by combining the initial letter of each word in a multiword term; they are pronounced as separate letters (*STC*/*Society for Technical Communication*). See **abbreviations** for the use of acronyms and initialisms.

activate / actuate

Both *activate* and *actuate* mean "make active," although *actuate* is usually applied only to mechanical processes.

- The relay *actuates* the trip hammer. [mechanical process]
- The electrolyte *activates* the battery. [chemical process]
- The governor *activated* the National Guard. [legal process]

active voice (*see* voice)

ad hoc

Ad hoc is Latin for "for this" or "for this particular occasion." An ad hoc committee is one set up temporarily to consider a particular issue.

The term has been fully assimilated into English and thus does not have to be italicized. See also **foreign words in English**.

adapt / adept / adopt

Adapt is a verb meaning "adjust to a new situation." *Adept* is an adjective meaning "highly skilled." *Adopt* is a verb meaning "take or use as one's own."

- The company will *adopt* a policy of finding engineers who are *adept* administrators and who can *adapt* to new situations.

adapting to new technologies

Technology constantly evolves and, whether you are in the classroom or in the workplace, the devices and software tools that are familiar and comfortable to you today will be out of date all too quickly. Imagine, for example, that you have spent months learning to use your employer's preferred word processing software, and just when you've finally mastered it, your employer announces that a new version of the software is being acquired. Although the new software promises more features and improved efficiency, it also promises to make much of your hard work obsolete. This entry is designed to help you cope with such a situation by providing useful approaches to working with new technologies. See also **selecting the medium**.

Technology You Need to Know

The question you should ask when faced with a new technology is "how much do I *need* to know about the specific technology or device to do my work?" That is, you must determine the *level of knowledge* you need to accomplish your goals for making effective use of a technology, new application, or device.

What you need to learn will depend on your workplace context. For many circumstances, you may need only a basic level that will enable you to accomplish specific and limited tasks, such as navigating a software program to open, modify, save, and print files. For technologies directly related to your work, however, you may need a thorough knowledge so that you can adapt the technology to many situations and can assess its effectiveness for the benefit of colleagues, clients, or others. In other cases, you may need to gain just enough knowledge to allow you to work well with technical specialists with expert knowledge and to ask the right questions.

Strategies for Learning a New Technology

Because of the flood of new technologies, it is important to develop methods for quickly mastering new technological tools to the level you need. The following are suggestions for navigating the functions and operations of devices and programs with which you are unfamiliar:

- *Experimentation*. Often, the best way to acquaint yourself with a new tool is simply to begin using it, even if you don't fully understand what the tool does or why you might want to learn it. This approach, in which you "play" with a new tool until it becomes familiar, will help you develop greater confidence with new technologies and will rarely have negative consequences. Most software programs cannot be "broken" merely by experimenting with them and doing so is good preparation for more formal learning.
- *IT staff and trusted colleagues*. Many organizations employ information technology (IT) specialists and trainers whose primary task is helping other employees use technology more effectively. Don't be afraid to call on them as you begin to use a new tool. If you can't rely on a dedicated IT staff to train you, seek out tech-savvy individuals who seem to have a high level of technological knowledge. You may be able to return the favor by sharing your expertise in another area.
- *Built-in help*. Most modern software programs come equipped with built-in tutorials and searchable help files. In the past, many help menus were less than helpful, but trends in technical documentation have led to greatly improved help files. Many built-in help documents today are thorough and written in plain, easy-to-understand language.
- *Official help manuals*. Upon acquiring a new technological tool, such as a cell phone or camera, you may be inclined to skip the instruction manual that came in the box or that is available online, but often these manuals contain a good overview of the device's features and hidden gems of information that you would otherwise miss.
- *Third-party help manuals*. Many publishers offer how-to guides for both computer software and hardware. With full-color printing, plenty of photos, and a casual, friendly tone, these books attempt to simplify information that may seem overwhelming or confusing in the tool's official documentation.
- *Online tutorials*. Sometimes the easiest way to learn a new technology is by watching someone use it. Video tutorial sites such as Lynda.com offer precise, professional guidance for a fee; many amateur technology enthusiasts upload tutorials of their own to free video-sharing Web sites.

- *Careful Internet searches*. When you encounter a problem with a technological tool, chances are someone else has dealt with it before. You may find helpful advice on an Internet message board or on the Web site of the company that developed the tool. Search for the issue by using precise terminology, including the name of the tool and several additional keywords that describe your specific problem.

DIGITAL TIP

Assessing Hardware and Software

When individuals or organizations consider adopting a new technology, they need to ask a number of questions to assess the value of the technology for themselves or other organizations. For a list of such questions, see ***bedfordstmartins.com/alred*** and select *Digital Tips*, "Assessing Hardware and Software."

adjectives

DIRECTORY

Limiting Adjectives 15
Comparison of Adjectives 17
Placement of Adjectives 18
Use of Adjectives 19

An adjective is any word that modifies a **noun** or **pronoun**. *Descriptive adjectives* identify a quality of a noun or pronoun. *Limiting adjectives* impose boundaries on the noun or pronoun.

- *hot* surface [descriptive]
- *three* phone lines [limiting]

Limiting Adjectives

Limiting adjectives include the following categories:

- Articles (*a*, *an*, *the*)
- Demonstrative adjectives (*this*, *that*, *these*, *those*)
- Possessive adjectives (*my*, *your*, *his*, *her*, *its*, *our*, *their*)
- Numeral adjectives (*two*, *first*)
- Indefinite adjectives (*all*, *none*, *some*, *any*)

Articles. Articles (*a*, *an*, *the*) are traditionally classified as adjectives because they modify nouns by either limiting them or making them more specific. See also **articles** and **English as a second language**.

Demonstrative Adjectives. A demonstrative adjective points to the thing it modifies, specifying the object's position in space or time. *This* and *these* specify a closer position; *that* and *those* specify a more remote position.

- *This* report is more current than *that* report, which Human Resources distributed last month.
- *These* sales figures are more recent than *those* reported last week.

Demonstrative adjectives often cause problems when they modify the nouns *kind*, *type*, and *sort*. Demonstrative adjectives used with those nouns should agree with them in number.

- *this* kind, *these* kinds; *that* type, *those* types

Confusion often develops when the preposition *of* is added (*this kind of*, *these kinds of*) and the object of the preposition does not conform in number to the demonstrative adjective and its noun. See also **agreement** and **prepositions**.

- *This kind of* human resources ~~policies are~~ *policy is* standard.
- *These kinds of* human resources ~~policy is~~ *policies are* standard.

Avoid using demonstrative adjectives with words like *kind*, *type*, and *sort* because doing so can easily lead to vagueness. Instead, be more specific. See also **kind of / sort of**.

Possessive Adjectives. Because possessive adjectives (*my*, *your*, *his*, *her*, *its*, *our*, *their*) directly modify nouns, they function as adjectives, even though they are pronoun forms (*my* idea, *her* plans, *their* projects). See also **functional shift**.

Numeral Adjectives. Numeral adjectives identify quantity, degree, or place in a sequence. They always modify count nouns. Numeral adjectives are divided into two subclasses: cardinal and ordinal. A *cardinal adjective* expresses an exact quantity (*one* pencil, *two* computers); an *ordinal adjective* expresses degree or sequence (*first* quarter, *second* edition).

In most writing, an ordinal adjective should be spelled out if it is a single word (*tenth*) and written in figures if it is more than one word (*312th*). Ordinal numbers can also function as adverbs. ("John arrived *first*.") See also **first / firstly** and **numbers**.

Indefinite Adjectives. Indefinite adjectives do not designate anything specific about the nouns they modify (*some* CD-ROMs, *all* designers). The articles *a* and *an* are included among the indefinite adjectives (*a* chair, *an* application).

Comparison of Adjectives

Most adjectives in the positive form show the comparative form with the suffix *-er* for two items and the superlative form with the suffix *-est* for three or more items.

- The first report is *long*. [positive form]
- The second report is *longer*. [comparative form]
- The third report is *longest*. [superlative form]

Many two-syllable adjectives and most three-syllable adjectives are preceded by the word *more* or *most* to form the comparative or the superlative.

- The new media center is *more* impressive than the old one. It is the *most* impressive in the county.

A few adjectives have irregular forms of comparison (*much*, *more*, *most*; *little*, *less*, *least*).

Some adjectives (*round*, *unique*, *exact*, *accurate*), often called *absolute words*, are not logically subject to comparison. See also **equal / unique / perfect**.

ESL TIPS for Using Adjectives

Do not add *-s* or *-es* to an adjective to make it plural.

- the *long* trip
- the *long* trips

Capitalize adjectives of origin (city, state, nation, continent).

- the *Venetian* canals
- the *Texas* longhorn steer

(*continued*)

ESL TIPS for Using Adjectives (*continued*)

- the *French* government
- the *African* deserts

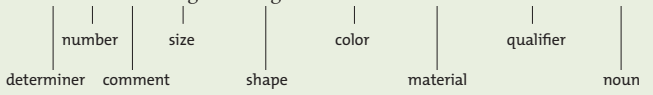
In English, verbs of feeling (for example, *bore*, *interest*, *surprise*) have two adjectival forms: the present participle (*-ing*) and the past participle (*-ed*). Use the present participle to describe what causes the feeling. Use the past participle to describe the person who experiences the feeling.

- We heard the *surprising* election results.
  [The *election results* cause the feeling.]
- Only the losing candidate was *surprised* by the election results.
  [The *candidate* experienced the feeling of surprise.]

Adjectives follow nouns in English in only two cases: when the adjective functions as a subjective complement ("That project is not *finished*") and when an adjective phrase or clause modifies the noun ("The project *that was suspended temporarily*"). In all other cases, adjectives are placed before the noun.

When a sentence has multiple adjectives, it is often difficult to know the right order. The guidelines illustrated in the following example would apply in most circumstances, but there are exceptions. (Normally do not use a phrase with so many stacked **modifiers**.) See also **articles**.

- The six extra-large rectangular brown cardboard take-out containers



Placement of Adjectives

When limiting and descriptive adjectives appear together, the limiting adjectives precede the descriptive adjectives, with the articles usually in the first position.

- *The ten yellow* taxis were sold at auction. [article (*The*), limiting adjective (*ten*), descriptive adjective (*yellow*)]

Within a sentence, adjectives may appear before the nouns they modify (the attributive position) or after the nouns they modify (the predicative position).

- *The small* jobs are given priority. [attributive position]
- The exposure is *brief*. [predicative position]

Use of Adjectives

Nouns often function as adjectives to clarify the meaning of other nouns.

- The *accident* report prompted a *product* redesign.

When adjectives modifying the same noun can be reversed and still make sense or when they can be separated by *and* or *or*, they should be separated by commas.

- The division seeks *bright, energetic, creative* designers.

Notice that there is no comma after *creative*. Never use a comma between a final adjective and the noun it modifies. When an adjective modifies a phrase, no comma is required.

- We need an *updated Web-page design*.
  [*Updated* modifies the phrase *Web-page design*.]

Writers sometimes string together a series of nouns used as adjectives to form a unit modifier, thereby creating stacked (jammed) **modifiers**, which can confuse readers. See also **word choice**.

adjustment letters

An adjustment **letter** or **e-mail** is written in response to a **complaint** and tells a customer or client what your organization intends to do about the complaint. Although sent in response to a problem, an adjustment letter actually provides an excellent opportunity to build goodwill for your organization. An effective adjustment letter, such as the examples shown in Figures A–6 and A–7, can not only repair any damage done but also restore the customer's confidence in your company.

No matter how unreasonable the complaint, the **tone** of your response should be positive and respectful. Avoid emphasizing the problem, but do take responsibility for it when appropriate. Focus your response on what you are doing to correct the problem. Settle such matters quickly and courteously, and lean toward giving the customer or client the benefit of the doubt at a reasonable cost to your organization. See also **refusal letters**.

INTERNET SERVICES CORPORATION
10876 Crispen Way
Chicago, Illinois 60601

May 11, 2012

Mr. Jason Brandon
4319 Anglewood Street
Tacoma, WA 98402

Dear Mr. Brandon:

We are sorry that your experience with our customer support help line did not go smoothly. We are eager to restore your confidence in our ability to provide dependable, high-quality service. Your next three months of Internet access will be complimentary as our sincere apology for your unpleasant experience.

Providing dependable service is what is expected of us, and when our staff doesn't provide quality service, it is easy to understand our customers' disappointment. I truly wish we had performed better in our guidance for setup and log-on procedures and that your experience had been a positive one. To prevent similar problems in the future, we plan to use your letter in training sessions with customer support personnel.

We appreciate your taking the time to write us. It helps to receive comments such as yours, and we conscientiously follow through to be sure that proper procedures are being met.

Yours truly,

Inez Carlson

Inez Carlson, Vice President
Customer Support Services

www.isc.com

FIGURE A–6. Adjustment Letter (When Company Is at Fault)

Dear Mr. Sanchez:

Enclosed is your Addison Laptop Computer, which you shipped to us on August 31.

Our technical staff reports that the laptop was damaged by exposure to high levels of humidity. You stated in your letter that you often use your laptop on a covered patio. Doing so in a high-humidity environment, as is typical in Louisiana, can result in damage to the internal circuitry of your computer—as described on page 32 of your Addison Owner's Manual.

We have replaced the damaged circuitry and thoroughly tested your laptop. To avoid similar problems, we recommend you avoid leaving your laptop exposed to high humidity for extended periods.

If you should find that the problem recurs, please call us at 800-555-0990. We will be glad to work with you to find a solution.

Sincerely,

Customer Service Department

FIGURE A–7. Partial Adjustment (Accompanying a Product)

Full Adjustments

Before granting an adjustment to a claim for which your company is at fault, first determine what happened and what you can do to satisfy the customer. Be certain that you are familiar with your company's adjustment policy—and be careful with **word choice**:

- We have just received your letter of May 7 about our defective gas grill.

Saying something is "defective" could be ruled in a court of law as an admission that the product is in fact defective. When you are in doubt, seek legal advice.

Grant adjustments graciously: A settlement made grudgingly will do more harm than good. Not only must you be gracious, but you must also acknowledge the error in such a way that the customer will not lose confidence in your company. Emphasize early what the reader will consider good news.

- Enclosed is a replacement for the damaged part.
- Yes, you were incorrectly billed for the delivery.
- Please accept our apologies for the error in your account.

◖ PROFESSIONALISM NOTE If an explanation will help restore your reader's confidence, explain what caused the problem. You might point out any steps you may be taking to prevent a recurrence of the problem. Explain that customer feedback helps your firm keep the quality of its product or service high. Close pleasantly, looking forward, not back. Avoid recalling the problem in your closing (do not write, "Again, we apologize . . ."). ◗

The adjustment letter in Figure A–6, for example, begins by accepting responsibility and offers an apology for the customer's inconvenience (note the use of the pronouns *we* and *our*). The second paragraph expresses a desire to restore goodwill and describes specifically how the writer intends to make the adjustment. The third paragraph expresses appreciation to the customer for calling attention to the problem and assures him that his complaint has been taken seriously.

Partial Adjustments

You may sometimes need to grant a partial adjustment—even if a claim is not really justified—to regain the lost goodwill of a customer or client. If, for example, a customer incorrectly uses a product or service, you may need to help that person better understand the correct use of that product or service. In such a circumstance, remember that your customer or client believes that his or her claim is justified. Therefore, you should give the explanation before granting the claim—otherwise, your reader may never get to the explanation. If your explanation establishes customer responsibility, do so tactfully. Figure A–7 is an example of a partial adjustment letter. See also **correspondence**.

adverbs

An adverb modifies the action or condition expressed by a **verb**.

- The wrecking ball hit the side of the building *hard*.
  [The adverb tells *how* the wrecking ball hit the building.]

An adverb also can modify an **adjective**, another adverb, or a **clause**.

- The brochure design used *remarkably* bright colors.
  [*Remarkably* modifies the adjective *bright*.]
- The redesigned brake pad lasted *much* longer.
  [*Much* modifies the adverb *longer*.]
- *Surprisingly*, the engine failed.
  [*Surprisingly* modifies the clause *the engine failed*.]

Types of Adverbs

A simple adverb can answer one of the following questions:

Where? (adverb of place)

- Move the display *forward* slightly.

When? or *How often?* (adverb of time)

- Replace the thermostat *immediately*.
- I worked overtime *twice* this week.

How? (adverb of manner)

- Add the solvent *cautiously*.

How much? (adverb of degree)

- The *nearly* completed report was sent to the director.

An interrogative adverb can ask a question (*Where? When? Why? How?*):

- *How* many hours did you work last week?
- *Why* was the hard drive reformatted?

A conjunctive adverb can modify the clause that it introduces as well as join two independent clauses with a **semicolon**. The most common conjunctive adverbs are *however*, *nevertheless*, *moreover*, *therefore*, *further*, *then*, *consequently*, *besides*, *accordingly*, *also*, and *thus*.

- I rarely work on weekends; *however*, this weekend will be an exception.

In this example, note that a semicolon precedes and a comma follows *however*. The conjunctive adverb (*however*) introduces the independent clause (*this weekend will be an exception*) and indicates its relationship to the preceding independent clause (*I rarely work on weekends*). See also **transition**.

Comparison of Adverbs

Most one-syllable adverbs show comparison with the suffixes *-er* and *-est*.

- This motor runs *fast*. [positive form]
- This motor runs *faster* than the old one. [comparative form]
- This motor runs the *fastest* of the three tested. [superlative form]

Most adverbs with two or more syllables end in *-ly*, and most adverbs ending in *-ly* are compared by inserting the comparative *more* or *less* or the superlative *most* or *least* in front of them.

- The patient recovered *more quickly* than the staff expected.
- *Most surprisingly*, the engine failed during the final test phase.

A few irregular adverbs require a change in form to indicate comparison (*well*, *better*, *best*; *badly*, *worse*, *worst*; *far*, *farther*, *farthest*).

- The training program functions *well*.
- Our training program functions *better* than most others in the industry.
- Many consider our training program the *best* in the industry.

Placement of Adverbs

An adverb usually should be placed in front of the verb it modifies.

- The pilot *methodically* performed the preflight check.

An adverb may, however, follow the verb (or the verb and its object) that it modifies.

- The system failed *unexpectedly*.
- They replaced the hard drive *quickly*.

An adverb may be placed between a helping verb and a main verb.

- In this temperature range, the pressure will *quickly* drop.

Adverbs such as *only*, *nearly*, *almost*, *just*, and *hardly* should be placed immediately before the words they limit. See also **modifiers** and **only**.

affect / effect

Affect is a **verb** that means "influence." ("The decision could *affect* the company's stock value.") *Effect* can function as a **noun** that means "result" ("The decision had a positive *effect*") or as a verb that means "bring about" or "cause." However, avoid *effect* as a verb when you can replace it with a less-formal word, such as *make* or *produce*.

- The new technician will ~~effect~~ *make* several changes to network security.

affectation

Affectation is the use of language that is more formal, technical, or showy than necessary to communicate information to the reader. Affectation is a widespread writing problem in the workplace because many people feel that affectation lends a degree of authority to their writing. In fact, affectation can alienate customers, clients, and colleagues because it forces readers to work harder to understand the writer's meaning.

Affected writing typically contains inappropriate abstract, highly technical, or foreign words and is often liberally sprinkled with trendy **buzzwords**.

❖ ETHICS NOTE **Jargon** and **euphemisms** can become affectation, especially if their purpose is to hide relevant facts or give a false impression of competence. See **ethics in writing**. ❖

Writers easily slip into affectation through the use of long variants—words created by adding prefixes and suffixes to simpler words (*orientate* for *orient*; *utilization* for *use*). Unnecessarily formal words (such as *penultimate* for *next to last*), created words using *-ese* (such as *managementese*), and outdated words (such as *aforesaid*) can produce affectation. (See also **above**.) Elegant variation—attempting to avoid repeating a word within a paragraph by substituting a pretentious synonym—is also a form of affectation. Either repeat the term or use a pronoun.

- The use of digital modules in the assembly process has increased production. ~~Modular utilization has also~~ *and* cut costs.

Another type of affectation is **gobbledygook**, which is wordy, roundabout writing with many legal- and technical-sounding terms (such as *wherein* and *morphing*).

WEB LINK	Affected Writing Revised
For an example of regulations that are revised to eliminate various forms of affectation, see ***bedfordstmartins.com/alred*** and select *Model Documents Gallery.*	

Understanding the possible reasons for affectation is the first step toward avoiding it. The following are some causes of affectation.

- *Impression*. Some writers use pretentious language to try to impress the reader with fancy words instead of evidence and logic.
- *Insecurity*. Writers who are insecure about their facts, conclusions, or arguments may try to hide behind a smoke screen of pretentious words.
- *Imitation*. Perhaps unconsciously, some writers imitate the poor writing they see around them.
- *Intimidation*. A few writers, consciously or unconsciously, try to intimidate or overwhelm their readers with words, often to protect themselves from criticism.
- *Initiation*. Writers who are new to a field often feel that one way to prove their professional expertise is to use as much technical terminology and jargon as possible.
- *Imprecision*. Writers who are having trouble being precise sometimes find that an easy solution is to use a vague, trendy, or pretentious word.

See also **clichés**, **conciseness**, **nominalizations**, and **word choice**.

affinity

Affinity refers to the attraction of two persons or things to each other. *Affinity* should not be used to mean "ability" or "aptitude."

- She has an ~~affinity~~ aptitude for problem solving.

agreement

DIRECTORY
Subject-Verb Agreement 27
Compound Subjects 29
Pronoun-Antecedent Agreement 30

Grammatical agreement is the correspondence in form between different elements of a sentence to indicate **number**, **person**, **gender**, and **case**.

A subject and its **verb** must agree in number.

- The *design is* acceptable.
  [The singular subject, *design*, requires the singular verb, *is*.]
- The new *products are* going into production soon.
  [The plural subject, *products*, requires the plural verb, *are*.]

A subject and its verb must agree in person.

- *I am* the designer.
  [The first-person singular subject, *I*, requires the first-person singular verb, *am*.]
- *They are* the designers.
  [The third-person plural subject, *they*, requires the third-person plural verb, *are*.]

A **pronoun** and its antecedent must agree in person, number, gender, and case.

- The *employees* report that *they* are more efficient in the new facility.
  [The third-person plural subject, *employees*, requires the third-person plural pronoun, *they*.]
- *Kaye McGuire* will meet with the staff on Friday, when *she* will assign duties.
  [The third-person singular subject, *Kaye McGuire*, requires *she*, the third-person feminine pronoun, in the subjective case.]

See also **sentence construction**.

Subject-Verb Agreement

Subject-verb agreement is not affected by intervening **phrases** and **clauses**.

- *One* in twenty hard drives we receive from our suppliers *is* faulty.
  [The verb, *is*, must agree in number with the subject, *one*, not *hard drives* or *suppliers*.]

The same is true when **nouns** fall between a subject and its verb.

- Only *one* of the emergency lights *was* functioning.
  [The subject of the verb is *one*, not *lights*.]
- *Each* of the switches *controls* a separate circuit.
  [The subject of the verb is *each*, not *switches*.]

Note that *one* and *each* are normally singular.

Indefinite pronouns such as *some*, *none*, *all*, *more*, and *most* may be singular or plural, depending on whether they are used with a mass noun ("*Most* of the oil *has* been used") or with a count noun ("*Most* of the drivers *know* why they are here"). Mass nouns are singular, and count nouns are plural. Other words, such as *type*, *part*, *series*, and *portion*, take singular verbs even when they precede a phrase containing a plural noun.

- A *series* of meetings *was* held to improve the product design.
- A large *portion* of most annual reports *is* devoted to promoting the corporate image.

Modifying phrases can obscure a simple subject.

- The *advice* of two engineers, one lawyer, and three executives *was* obtained prior to making a commitment.
  [The subject of the verb *was* is *advice*.]

Inverted word order can cause problems with agreement.

- From this work *have come* several important *improvements*.
  [The subject of the verb is *improvements*, not *work*.]

The number of a subjective **complement** does not affect the number of the verb—the verb must always agree with the subject.

- The *topic* of his report *is* employee benefits.
  [The subject of the sentence is *topic*, not *benefits*.]

A subject that expresses measurement, weight, mass, or total often takes a singular verb even when the subject word is plural in form. Such subjects are treated as a unit.

- *Four weeks is* the normal duration of the training program.

A verb following the relative pronoun *who* or *that* agrees in number with the noun to which the pronoun refers (its antecedent).

- Steel is one of those *industries* that *are* most affected by global competition.
  [*That* refers to *industries*.]
- She is one of those *employees* who *are* rarely absent.
  [*Who* refers to *employees*.]

The word *number* sometimes causes confusion. When used to mean a specific number, it is singular.

- *The number* of committee members *was* six.

When used to mean an approximate number, it is plural.

- *A number* of people *were* waiting for the announcement.

Relative pronouns (*who*, *which*, *that*) may take either singular or plural verbs, depending on whether the antecedent is singular or plural. See also **who / whom**.

- He is a manager *who seeks* the views of others.
- He is one of those managers *who seek* the views of others.

Some abstract nouns are singular in meaning but plural in form: *mathematics*, *news*, *physics*, and *economics*.

- *Mathematics is* essential in computer science.

Some words, such as the plural *jeans* and *scissors*, cause special problems.

- The *scissors were* ordered last week.
  [The subject is the plural *scissors*.]
- *A pair* of scissors *is* on order.
  [The subject is the singular *pair*.]

A book with a plural title takes a singular verb.

- *Basic Medical Laboratory Techniques* is an essential resource.

A collective noun (*committee*, *faculty*, *class*, *jury*) used as a subject takes a singular verb when the group is thought of as a unit and a plural verb when the individuals in the group are thought of separately.

- The *committee is* unanimous in its decision.
- The *committee are* returning to their offices.

A clearer way to emphasize the individuals would be to use a phrase.

- The *committee members are* returning to their offices.

Compound Subjects

A compound subject is composed of two or more elements joined by a **conjunction** such as *and*, *or*, *nor*, *either . . . or*, or *neither . . . nor*. Usually, when the elements are connected by *and*, the subject is plural and requires a plural verb.

- *Professional writing and translation are* prerequisites for this position.

One exception occurs when the elements connected by *and* form a unit or refer to the same thing. In that case, the subject is regarded as singular and takes a singular verb.

- *Bacon and eggs is* a high-cholesterol meal.
- Our greatest *challenge and business opportunity* is the Internet.

A compound subject with a singular element and a plural element joined by *or* or *nor* requires that the verb agree with the closer element.

- Neither the director nor the *project assistants were* available.
- Neither the project assistants nor the *director was* available.

If *each* or *every* modifies the elements of a compound subject, use the singular verb.

- *Each* manager and supervisor *has* a production goal to meet.
- *Every* manager and supervisor *has* a production goal to meet.

Pronoun-Antecedent Agreement

Every pronoun must have an antecedent—a noun to which it refers. See also **pronoun reference**.

- When *employees* are hired, *they* must review the policy manual. [The pronoun *they* refers to the antecedent *employees*.]

Gender. A pronoun must agree in gender with its antecedent.

- *Mr. Swivet* in the accounting department acknowledges *his* share of responsibility for the misunderstanding, just as *Ms. Barkley* in the research division must acknowledge *hers*.

Traditionally, a masculine, singular pronoun was used to agree with such indefinite antecedents as *anyone* and *person*. ("*Each* may stay or go as *he* chooses.") Because such usage ignores or excludes women, use alternatives when they are available. One solution is to use the plural. Another is to use both feminine and masculine pronouns, although that combination is clumsy when used too often.

- ~~Every employee~~ All employees must sign ~~his~~ their time ~~card~~ cards.
- Every employee must sign his or her time card.

Do not attempt to avoid expressing gender by resorting to a plural pronoun when the antecedent is singular. You may be able to avoid the pronoun entirely.

- Every employee must sign ~~their~~ a time card.

Avoid gender-related stereotypes in general references, as in "the nurse . . . *she*" or "the doctor . . . *he*." What if the nurse is male or the doctor female? See also **biased language**.

Number. A pronoun must agree with its antecedent in number. Many problems of agreement are caused by expressions that are not clear in number.

- Although the typical engine runs well in moderate temperatures, ~~they~~ it often ~~stall~~ stalls in extreme cold.

Use singular pronouns with the antecedents *everybody* and *everyone* unless to do so would be illogical because the meaning is obviously plural. See also **everybody / everyone**.

- *Everyone* pulled *his or her* share of the load.
- *Everyone* thought my plan should be revised, and I really couldn't blame *them*.

Collective nouns may use a singular or plural pronoun, depending on the meaning.

- The *committee* agreed to the recommendations only after *it* had deliberated for days. [*committee* thought of as collective singular]
- The *committee* quit for the day and went to *their* respective homes. [*committee* thought of as plural]

Demonstrative **adjectives** sometimes cause problems with agreement of number. *This* and *that* are used with singular nouns, and *these* and *those* are used with plural nouns. Demonstrative adjectives often cause problems when they modify the nouns *kind*, *type*, and *sort*. When used with those nouns, demonstrative adjectives should agree with them in number.

- *this* kind, *these* kinds; *that* type, *those* types

Confusion often develops when the **preposition** *of* is added (*this kind of*, *these kinds of*) and the object of the preposition does not agree in number with the demonstrative adjective and its noun.

- This kind of retirement ~~plans are~~ plan is best.

Avoid that error by remembering to make the demonstrative adjective, the noun, and the object of the preposition—all three—agree in number. The agreement makes the sentence not only correct but also more precise. Using demonstrative adjectives with words like *kind*, *type*, and *sort* can easily lead to vagueness. See **kind of / sort of**.

Compound Antecedents. A compound antecedent joined by *or* or *nor* is singular if both elements are singular and plural if both elements are plural.

- Neither the *engineer* nor the *technician* could do *his* job until *he* understood the new concept.
- Neither the *executives* nor the *directors* were pleased at the performance of *their* company.

When one of the antecedents connected by *or* or *nor* is singular and the other plural, the pronoun agrees with the closer antecedent.

- Either the *computer* or the *printers* should have *their* serial numbers registered.
- Either the *printers* or the *computer* should have *its* serial number registered.

A compound antecedent with its elements joined by *and* requires a plural pronoun.

- *Seon Ju and Juanita* took *their* layout drawings with them.

If both elements refer to the same person, however, use the singular pronoun.

- The noted *biologist and author* departed from *her* prepared speech.

all ready / already

All ready is a two-word phrase meaning "completely prepared." *Already* is an **adverb** that means "before this time" or "previously." ("They were *all ready* to cancel the order; fortunately, we had *already* corrected the shipments.")

all right

All right means "all correct." ("The answers were *all right*.") In formal writing, it should not be used to mean "good" or "acceptable." It is always written as two words, with no hyphen; *alright* is nonstandard.

all together / altogether

All together means "all acting together" or "all in one place." ("The necessary instruments were *all together* on the tray.") *Altogether* means "entirely" or "completely." ("The trip was *altogether* unnecessary.")

allude / elude / refer

Allude means to make an indirect reference to something. ("The report simply *alluded* to the problem, rather than stating it explicitly.") *Elude* means to escape notice or detection. ("The leak *eluded* the inspectors.") *Refer* is used to indicate a direct reference to something. ("She *referred* to the merger during her presentation.")

allusion / illusion

An *allusion* is an indirect reference to something not specifically mentioned. ("The report made an *allusion* to metal fatigue in the support structures.") An *illusion* is a mistaken perception or a false image. ("County officials are under the *illusion* that the landfill will last indefinitely.")

allusions

An allusion is an indirect reference to something from past or current events, literature, or other familiar sources. The use of allusion promotes economical writing because it is a shorthand way of referring to a body of material in a few words or of helping to explain a new and unfamiliar process in terms of one that is familiar. In the following example, the writer sums up a description with an allusion to a well-known

story. The allusion, with its implicit reference to "right standing up to might," concisely emphasizes the writer's point.

- As it currently exists, the review process involves the consumer's attorney sitting alone, usually without adequate technical assistance, faced by two or three government attorneys, two or three attorneys from CompuSystems, and large teams of experts who support the government and the corporation. The entire proceeding is reminiscent of David versus Goliath.

Be sure, of course, that your reader is familiar with the material to which you allude. Allusions should be used with restraint, especially in **international correspondence**. If overdone, allusions can lead to **affectation** or can be viewed merely as **clichés**. See also **technical writing style**.

almost / most

Do not use *most* as a colloquial substitute for *almost* in your writing.

- New shipments arrive ~~most~~ *almost* every day.

also

Also is an **adverb** that means "additionally." ("Two 5,000-gallon tanks are on-site, and several 2,500-gallon tanks are *also* available.") *Also* should not be used as a connective in the sense of "and."

- He brought the reports, the memos, ~~also~~ *and* the director's recommendations.

Avoid opening sentences with *also*. It is a weak transitional word that suggests an afterthought rather than planned writing.

- ~~Also~~, *In addition* he brought a cost analysis to support his proposal.
- ~~Also, he~~ *He also* brought a cost analysis to support his proposal.

ambiguity

A word or passage is ambiguous when it can be interpreted in two or more ways, yet it provides the reader with no certain basis for choosing among the alternatives.

- Mathematics is more valuable to an engineer than a computer. [Does that mean an engineer is more in need of mathematics than a computer is? Or does it mean that mathematics is more valuable to an engineer than a computer is?]

Ambiguity can take many forms, as in ambiguous **pronoun reference**.

AMBIGUOUS	Inadequate quality-control procedures have resulted in more equipment failures. This is our most serious problem at present. [Does *this* refer to *inadequate quality-control procedures* or to *equipment failures*?]
SPECIFIC	Inadequate quality-control procedures have resulted in more equipment failures. *These failures* are our most serious problem at present.
SPECIFIC	Inadequate quality-control procedures have resulted in more equipment failures. *Quality control* is our most serious problem at present.

Incomplete **comparison** and missing or misplaced **modifiers** (including **dangling modifiers**) cause ambiguity.

- Ms. Lee values rigid quality-control standards more than Mr. Rosenblum. [Complete the comparison.]

  does

- He lists his hobby as cooking. He is especially fond of cocker spaniels. [Add the missing modifier.]

  also

The placement of some modifiers enables them to be interpreted in either of two ways.

- She volunteered *immediately* to deliver the toxic substance.

By moving the word *immediately*, the meaning can be clarified.

- She *immediately* volunteered to deliver the toxic substance.
- She volunteered to deliver the toxic substance *immediately*.

Imprecise **word choice** (including faulty **idioms**) can cause ambiguity.

- The general manager has denied reports that the plant's recent fuel-allocation cut will be ~~restored~~ rescinded. [inappropriate word choice]

Various forms of **awkwardness** also can cause ambiguity.

amount / number

Amount is used with things that are thought of in bulk and that cannot be counted (mass **nouns**), as in "the *amount* of electricity." *Number* is used with things that can be counted as individual items (count nouns), as in "the *number* of employees."

ampersands

The ampersand (&) is a symbol sometimes used to represent the word *and*, especially in the names of organizations (*Kirkwell & Associates*). When you are writing the name of an organization in sentences, addresses, or references, spell out the word *and* unless the ampersand appears in the organization's official name on its letterhead stationery or Web site.

and / or

And/or means that either both circumstances are possible or only one of two circumstances is possible. This term is awkward and confusing because it makes the reader stop to puzzle over your distinction.

AWKWARD Use A *and/or* B.
IMPROVED Use A or B or both.

antonyms

An antonym is a word with a meaning opposite that of another word (*good/bad*, *wet/dry*, *fresh/stale*). Many pairs of words that look as if they are antonyms, such as *limit/delimit*, are not. When in doubt, consult thesauruses or **dictionaries** for antonyms as well as **synonyms**.

apostrophes

An apostrophe (') is used to show possession or to indicate the omission of letters. Sometimes it is also used to avoid confusion with certain plurals of words, letters, and **abbreviations**.

Showing Possession

An apostrophe is used with an *s* to form the possessive case of some nouns (the *report's* title). For further advice on using apostrophes to show possession, see **possessive case**.

Indicating Omission

An apostrophe is used to mark the omission of letters or **numbers** in a **contraction** or a date (*can't*, *I'm*, *I'll*; the class of *'15*).

Forming Plurals

An apostrophe can be used in forming the plurals of letters, words, or lowercase abbreviations if confusion might result from using *s* alone.

- The search program does not find *a*'s and *i*'s.
- Do not replace all *of which*'s in the document.
- *I*'s need to be distinguished from the number 1.
- Check for any c.o.d.'s.

Generally, however, add only *s* in roman (or regular) type when referring to words as words or capital letters. See also **italics**.

- Five *and*s appear in the first sentence.
- The applicants received *A*s and *B*s in their courses.

Do not use an apostrophe for plurals of abbreviations with all capital letters (*PDFs*) or a final capital letter (*ten PhDs*) or for plurals of numbers (*7s*, *the late 1990s*).

appendixes

An appendix, located at the end of a **formal report**, **proposal**, or other long document, supplements or clarifies the information in the body of the document. Appendixes (or *appendices*) can provide information that is too detailed or lengthy for the primary **audience** of the document. For example, an appendix could contain such material as **maps**, statistical analysis, **résumés** of key personnel involved in a proposed project, or other documents needed by secondary readers.

A document may have more than one appendix, with each providing only one type of information. When you include more than one appendix, arrange them in the order they are mentioned in the body of the document. Begin each appendix on a new page, and identify each with a letter, starting with the letter *A* (*Appendix A: Sample Questionnaire*). If you have only one appendix, title it simply "Appendix." List the titles and beginning page numbers of the appendixes in the **table of contents**.

application cover letters

When applying for a job, you usually need to submit both an application letter (also referred to as a *cover letter*) and a **résumé**. Employers may ask you to submit them by standard mail, online form, fax, or **e-mail**. See also **cover letters**, **job search**, and **letters**.

The application letter is essentially a **sales letter** in which you market your skills, abilities, and knowledge. Therefore, your application letter must be persuasive. The successful application letter accomplishes four tasks: (1) it serves as your personal introduction, provoking interest in recruiters by describing how your skills can contribute to their organization, (2) it explains to a prospective employer what particular job interests you and why, (3) it convinces the reader that you are a viable candidate by highlighting specific qualifications in your résumé, and (4) it provides the opportunity to request an interview. See also **correspondence**, **interviewing for a job**, **persuasion**, and **salary negotiations**.

◖ PROFESSIONALISM NOTE It is generally a good idea to submit an application cover letter with your résumé even if the prospective employer does not specifically request one. ◗

The sample application letters shown in Figures A–8 through A–10 follow the guidelines described in this entry. In each sample, the **emphasis**, **tone**, and **style** are tailored to fit the employer's need and highlight the applicant's qualifications. Note that the letter shown in Figure A–9 matches the résumé in Figure R–7 ("Joshua S. Goodman") and the letter depicting an experienced applicant in Figure A–10 matches the résumé in Figure R–8 ("Robert Mandillo").

From: Molly Sennett <sennett@execpr.com>
To: Bob Lupert <lupert@appliedsciences.com>
Sent: Thursday, February 23, 2012 10:47 AM
Subject: Application for Summer Internship
Attachment: Sennett_Resume.doc

Dear Mr. Lupert:

In the February 20 issue of the *Butler Gazette*, I learned that you have summer technical training internships available. This opportunity interests me because I know that Applied Sciences has one of the leading user-education centers in the country.

Your Web site states that you value collaborative and leadership skills. My current project at Penn State University—a computer tutoring system that teaches LISP—has helped me to develop these skills. This tutoring system, which I helped develop as part of a student engineering team, is the first of its kind and is now being sold across the country to various corporations and universities. As part of the team, I solved specific problems and then helped test and revise our work to improve efficiency.

Pursuing degrees in Industrial Management and Computer Science has prepared me to make valuable contributions to your goal of successful implementation of new software. Through my varied courses, which are described on my résumé, I have developed the ability to learn new skills quickly and independently and to interact effectively in a technical environment. My goal is to apply these abilities to user education at Applied Sciences, Inc.

I would appreciate the chance to interview with you at your earliest convenience. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Molly Sennett

277 Oak Street
Provo, UT 84602
435-228-3490

FIGURE A–8. Application Cover Letter Sent as E-mail (College Student Applying for an Internship)

222 Morewood Ave.
Pittsburgh, PA 15212
April 16, 2012

Ms. Judith Castro, Director
Human Resources
Natural History Museum
1201 S. Figueroa Street
Los Angeles, CA 90015

Dear Ms. Castro:

A graphic designer at Dyer/Khan, Jodi Hammel, has informed me that you are recruiting for a graphic designer in your Marketing Department. Your position interests me greatly because it offers me an opportunity both to fulfill my career goals and to promote the work of an internationally respected institution. Having participated in substantial volunteer activities at a local public museum, I am aware of the importance of your work.

I bring strong up-to-date academic and practical skills in multimedia tools and graphic arts production, as indicated in my enclosed résumé. Further, I have recent project management experience at Dyer/Khan, where I was responsible for the development of client brochures, newsletters, and posters. As project manager, I coordinated the project time lines, budgets, and production with clients, staff, and vendors.

My experience and contacts in the Los Angeles area media and entertainment community should help me make use of state-of-the-art design expertise. As you will see on my résumé, I have worked with the leading motion picture, television, and music companies—that experience should help me develop exciting marketing tools museum visitors and patrons will find attractive. For example, I helped design an upgrade of the CGI logo for Paramount Pictures and was formally commended by the Director of Marketing.

Could we schedule a meeting at your convenience to discuss this position further? Call me any weekday morning at 412-555-1212 (cell) or e-mail me at jgoodman@aol.com. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Joshua S. Goodman

Joshua S. Goodman

Enclosure: Résumé

FIGURE A–9. Application Cover Letter (Recent Graduate Applying for a Graphic Design Job)

Dear Ms. Smathers:

During the recent NOMAD convention in Washington, Karen Jarrett, Director of Operations, informed me of a possible opening at Aerospace Technologies for a manager of new product development. My extensive background in engineering exhibit design and management makes me an ideal candidate for the position she described.

I have been manager of the Exhibit Design Lab at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base for the past seven years. During that time, I received two Congressional Commendations for models of a space station laboratory and a docking/repair port. My experience in advanced exhibit design would give me a special advantage in helping develop AT's wind tunnel and aerospace models. Further, I have just learned this week that my exhibit design presented at NOMAD received a "Best of Show" Award.

As described on the enclosed résumé, I not only have workplace management experience but also have recently received an MBA from the University of Dayton. As a student in the MBA program, I won the Luson Scholarship to complete my coursework as well as the Jonas Outstanding Student Award.

I would be happy to discuss my qualifications in an interview at your convenience. Please telephone me at (937) 255-4137 or e-mail me at mand@juno.com. I look forward to talking with you.

Sincerely,

Robert Mandillo

FIGURE A–10. Application Cover Letter (Applicant with Years of Experience)

Opening

In the opening paragraph, provide **context** by indicating how you heard about the position and name the specific job title or area. If you have been referred to a company by an employee, a career counselor, a professor, or someone else, be sure to say so ("I understand from Mr. John Smith, Director of Operations, that your agency . . ."). Show enthusiasm by explaining why you are interested in the job and demonstrate your initiative as well as your knowledge of the organization by relating your interest to some facet of the organization. ("I am eager to continue my personal and professional growth with an international firm that specializes in creating solutions for customers, and I was impressed by Abel's reputation in infrastructure development.")

Body

In the middle **paragraphs**, use specific examples to demonstrate that you are qualified for the job. Limit the content by focusing on one basic point clearly stated in the topic sentence. For example, your second paragraph might focus on educational achievements and your third paragraph might focus on work experience. Do not just tell readers that you are qualified—*show* them by including examples and details. ("Most recently, as an intern at SJX Engineering, I assisted in the infrastructure design for a multi-million-dollar seaside resort.") Highlight a notable achievement that portrays your value and refer the reader to your enclosed résumé. Do not simply repeat information found in your résumé; rather, indicate how your talents can make valuable contributions to the company.

Closing

In the final paragraph, take the initiative. A passive approach ("I look forward to hearing from you") is likely to produce a passive reaction on the employer's part. Request an interview and consider mentioning that you intend to follow up. This approach will provoke a need for action in the reviewer—for example, the need to pass this application to the hiring authority. Additionally, your initiative will portray your sincere interest in the opportunity. Let the reader know how to reach you by including your phone number or e-mail address. End with a statement of goodwill, even if only a "thank you."

Proofread your letter *carefully*. Research shows that if employers notice even one spelling, grammatical, or mechanical error, they often eliminate candidates from consideration immediately. Such errors give employers the impression that you lack attention to detail or basic writing skills or that you are careless in the way you present yourself professionally. See also **proofreading**.

appositives

An appositive is a **noun** or noun **phrase** that follows and amplifies another noun or noun phrase. It has the same grammatical function as the noun it complements.

- Dennis Gabor, *the famous British scientist*, developed holography as an "exercise in serendipity."
- The famous British scientist *Dennis Gabor* developed holography as an "exercise in serendipity."

For detailed information on the use of **commas** with appositives, see **restrictive and nonrestrictive elements**.

If you are in doubt about the **case** of an appositive, check it by substituting the appositive for the noun it modifies. See also **pronouns**.

- My boss gave the two of us, Jim and ~~I~~ *me*, the day off.
  [You would not say, "My boss gave *I* the day off."]

articles

Articles (*a*, *an*, *the*) function as **adjectives** because they modify the items they designate by either limiting them or making them more specific. Articles may be indefinite or definite.

The indefinite articles, *a* and *an*, denote an unspecified item.

- *A* package was delivered yesterday. [*not* a specific package]

The choice between *a* and *an* depends on the sound rather than on the letter following the article, as described in the entry **a / an**.

The definite article, *the*, denotes a particular item.

- *The* package was delivered yesterday. [*one* specific package]

Do not omit all articles from your writing in an attempt to be concise. Including articles costs nothing; eliminating them makes reading more difficult. (See also **telegraphic style**.) However, do not overdo it. An article can be superfluous.

- Fill with *a* half *a* pint of fluid.
  [Choose one article and eliminate the other.]

Do not capitalize articles in titles except when they are the first word ("*The Scientist* reviewed *Saving the Humboldt Penguin*").

ESL TIPS for Using Articles

Whether to use a definite or an indefinite article is determined by what you can safely assume about your audience's knowledge. In each of these sentences, you can safely assume that the reader can clearly identify the noun. Therefore, use a definite article.

- *The* sun rises in the east.
  [The Earth has only one *sun*.]

(*continued*)

ESL TIPS for Using Articles (*continued*)

- Did you know that yesterday was *the* coldest day of the year so far? [The modified noun refers to *yesterday*.]
- *The* man who left his briefcase in the conference room was in a hurry. [The relative phrase *who left his briefcase in the conference room* restricts and, therefore, identifies the meaning of *man*.]

In the following sentence, however, you cannot assume that the reader can clearly identify the noun.

- *A* package is on the way.
  [It is impossible to identify specifically what package is meant.]

A more important question for some nonnative speakers of English is when *not* to use articles. These generalizations will help. Do not use articles with the following:

Singular proper nouns

- Utah, Main Street, Harvard University, Mount Hood

Plural nonspecific count nouns (when making generalizations)

- Helicopters are the new choice of transportation for the rich and famous.

Singular mass nouns

- She loves coffee.

Plural count nouns used as complements

- Those women are physicians.

See also English as a second language.

as / because / since

As, *because*, and *since* are commonly used to mean "because." To express cause, *because* is the strongest and most specific connective; *because* is unequivocal in stating a causal relationship. ("*Because* she did not have an engineering degree, she was not offered the job.")

Since is a weak substitute for *because* as a connective to express cause. However, *since* is an appropriate connective when the emphasis is on circumstance, condition, or time rather than on cause and effect. ("*Since* it went public, the company has earned a profit every year.")

As is the least definite connective to indicate cause; avoid using it for that purpose. See also **subordination**.

Avoid colloquial, nonstandard, or wordy phrases sometimes used instead of *as*, *because*, or *since*. See also **as much as / more than**, **as such**, **as well as**, **conciseness**, and **due to / because of**.

PHRASE	REPLACE WITH
being as, being that	because, since
inasmuch as, insofar as	since, because
on account of	because
on the grounds of/that	because
due to the fact that	because, since

as much as / more than

The phrases *as much as* and *more than* are sometimes incorrectly combined, especially when intervening phrases delay the completion of the phrase.

- The engineers had as much~~, if not more,~~ influence in planning the program ~~than~~ *as* the accountants *, if not more*.

as such

The phrase *as such* is seldom useful and should be omitted.

- Patients~~, as such,~~ should be partners in their treatment decisions.

as well as

Do not use *as well as* with *both*. The two expressions have similar meanings; use one or the other and adjust the verb as needed.

- Both General Motors ~~as well as~~ *and* Ford ~~is~~ *are* marketing hybrid vehicles.
- ~~Both~~ General Motors as well as Ford is marketing hybrid vehicles.

audience

Considering the needs of your audience is crucial to achieving your **purpose**. When you are writing to a specific reader, for example, you may find it useful to visualize a reader sitting across from you as you write. (See **correspondence**.) Likewise, when writing to an audience composed of relatively homogeneous **readers**, you might create an image of a composite reader and write for *that* reader. In such cases, using the **"you" viewpoint** and an appropriate **tone** will help you meet the needs of your readers as well as achieve an effective **technical writing style**. For meeting the needs of an audience composed of listeners, see **presentations**.

Analyzing Your Audience's Needs

The first step in analyzing your audience is to determine the readers' needs relative to your purpose and goals. Ask key questions during **preparation**.

- Who specifically is your reader? Do you have multiple readers? Who needs to see or use the document?
- What do your readers already know about your subject? What are your readers' attitudes about the subject? (Skeptical? Supportive? Anxious? Bored?)
- What particular information about your readers (experience, training, and work habits, for example) might help you write at the appropriate level of detail? (See **scope**.)
- What does the **context** suggest about meeting the readers' expectations for content or **layout and design**?
- Do you need to adapt your message for international readers? If so, see **global communication**, **global graphics**, and **international correspondence**.

In the workplace, your readers are usually less familiar with the subject than you are. You have to be careful, therefore, when writing on a topic that is unique to your area of specialization. Be sensitive to the needs of those whose training or experience lies in other areas; provide definitions of nonstandard terms and explanations of principles that you, as a specialist, take for granted. See also **defining terms**.

Writing for Multiple Audiences

For documents aimed at multiple audiences with different needs, consider segmenting the document for different groups of readers: an executive summary for top managers, an appendix with detailed data for technical specialists, and the body for those readers who need to make

decisions based on a detailed discussion. See also **formal reports** and **proposals**.

When you have multiple audiences with various needs but cannot segment your document, first determine your primary or most important readers—such as those who will make decisions based on the document—and be sure to meet their needs. Then, meet the needs of secondary readers, such as those who need only some of the document's contents, as long as you do not sacrifice the needs of your primary readers. See also **persuasion** and "Five Steps to Successful Writing" on page xv.

augment / supplement

Augment means to increase or magnify in size, degree, or effect. ("Our retirees can *augment* their incomes through consulting.") *Supplement* means to add something to make up for a deficiency. ("This patient should *supplement* his diet with vitamins.")

average / median / mean

The *average* (or arithmetic *mean*) is determined by adding two or more quantities and dividing the sum by the number of items totaled. For example, if one report is 10 pages, another is 30 pages, and a third is 20 pages, their *average* length is 20 pages. It is incorrect to say that "each report averages 20 pages" because each report is a specific length.

- *The three reports average*
  Each report averages 20 pages.

The *median* is the middle number in a sequence of numbers. For example, the *median* of the series 1, 3, 4, 7, 8 is 4.

awhile / a while

The **adverb** *awhile* means "for a short time." The **preposition** *for* should not precede *awhile* because *for* is inherent in the meaning of *awhile*. The two-word noun **phrase** *a while* means "a period of time."

- Wait ~~for~~ *awhile* before testing the sample.

- Wait for *a while*
  ~~awhile~~ before testing the sample.

awkwardness

Any writing that strikes readers as awkward—that is, as forced or unnatural—impedes their understanding. The following checklist and the entries indicated will help you smooth out most awkward passages.

WRITER'S CHECKLIST **Eliminating Awkwardness**

- ✔ Strive for **clarity** and **coherence** during **revision**.
- ✔ Check for **organization** to ensure your writing develops logically.
- ✔ Keep **sentence construction** as direct and simple as possible.
- ✔ Use **subordination** appropriately and avoid needless **repetition**.
- ✔ Correct any **logic errors** within your sentences.
- ✔ Revise for **conciseness** and avoid **expletives** where possible.
- ✔ Use the active **voice** unless you have a justifiable reason to use the passive voice.
- ✔ Eliminate jammed or misplaced **modifiers** and, for particularly awkward constructions, apply the tactics in **garbled sentences**.

B

bad / badly

Bad is the **adjective** form that follows such linking **verbs** as *feel* and *look*. ("We don't want to look *bad* at the meeting.") *Badly* is an **adverb**. ("The iron frame corroded *badly*.") To say "I feel *badly*" would mean, literally, that your sense of touch is impaired. See also **good / well**.

be sure to

The **phrase** *be sure and* is colloquial and unidiomatic when used for *be sure to*. See also **idioms**.

- When you sign the contract, be sure ~~and~~ to keep a copy.

beside / besides

Besides, meaning "in addition to" or "other than," should be carefully distinguished from *beside*, meaning "next to" or "apart from." ("*Besides* two of us from Radiology, three interns from Neurology stood *beside* the director during the ceremony.")

between / among

Between is normally used to relate two items or persons. ("The alloy offers a middle ground *between* durability and cost.") *Among* is used to relate more than two. ("The subcontracting was distributed *among* three firms.") *Amongst* is a variant, chiefly British spelling.

B

between you and me

The expression *between you and I* is incorrect. Because the **pronouns** are **objects** of the **preposition** *between*, the objective form of the personal pronoun (*me*) must be used. See also **case**.

- Between you and ~~I~~ *me*, Joan should be promoted.

bi- / semi-

When used with periods of time, *bi-* means "two" or "every two," as in *bimonthly*, which means "once in two months." When used with periods of time, *semi-* means "half of" or "occurring twice within a period of time." *Semimonthly* means "twice a month." Both *bi-* and *semi-* normally are joined with the following element without a space or **hyphen**.

biannual / biennial

In conventional usage, *biannual* means "twice during the year," and *biennial* means "every other year." See also **bi- / semi-**.

biased language

Biased language refers to words and expressions that offend because they make inappropriate assumptions or stereotypes about gender, ethnicity, physical or mental disability, age, or sexual orientation. Biased language, which is often used unintentionally, can defeat your **purpose** by damaging your credibility.

◖ PROFESSIONALISM NOTE The easiest way to avoid bias is simply not to mention differences among people unless the differences are relevant to the discussion. Keep current with accepted usage and, if you are unsure of the appropriateness of an expression or the tone of a passage, have several colleagues review the material and give you their assessments. ◗

Sexist Language

Sexist language can be an outgrowth of sexism, the arbitrary stereotyping of men and women — it can breed and reinforce inequality. To

avoid sexism in your writing, treat men and women equally and use nonsexist occupational descriptions.

INSTEAD OF	CONSIDER
chairman, chairwoman	chair, chairperson
foreman	supervisor, manager
man-hours	staff hours, worker hours
policeman, policewoman	police officer
salesman, saleswoman	salesperson

Use parallel terms to describe men and women.

INSTEAD OF	USE
ladies and men	ladies and gentlemen, women and men
man and wife	husband and wife
Ms. Jones and Bernard Weiss	Ms. Jones and Mr. Weiss, Mary Jones and Bernard Weiss

One common way of handling **pronoun references** that could apply equally to a man or a woman is the use of the expression *his or her*. To avoid this awkward usage, try rewriting the sentence in the plural. See also **he / she**.

- ~~Every employee~~ *All employees* should submit ~~his or her~~ *their* expense ~~report~~ *reports* by Monday.

Another solution is to omit pronouns completely if they are not essential to the meaning of the sentence.

- Every employee should submit ~~his or her~~ *an* expense report by Monday.

Other Types of Biased Language

Identifying people by racial, ethnic, or religious categories is simply not relevant in most workplace writing. Telling readers that an accountant is Native American or an attorney is Jewish almost never conveys useful information.

Consider how you refer to people with disabilities. If you refer to "a disabled employee," you imply that the part (*disabled*) is as significant as the whole (*employee*). Use "an employee with a disability" instead. Similarly, the preferred usage is "a person who uses a wheelchair" rather than "a wheelchair-bound person," an expression that inappropriately

equates the wheelchair with the person. Likewise, references to a person's age can be inappropriate, as in expressions like "middle-aged manager" or "young Web designer." See also **ethics in writing**.

bibliographies

A bibliography is an alphabetical list of books, articles, Web sources, and other works that have been consulted in preparing a document or that are useful for reference purposes. A bibliography provides a convenient alphabetical listing of sources in a standardized form for readers interested in getting further information on the topic or in assessing the scope of the **research**.

Whereas a list of references or works cited refers to works actually cited in the text, a bibliography also includes works consulted for general background information. For information on using various citation styles, see **documenting sources**.

Entries in a bibliography are listed alphabetically by the author's last name. If an author is unknown, the entry is alphabetized by the first word in the title (other than *A*, *An*, or *The*). Entries also can be arranged by subject and then ordered alphabetically within those categories.

An annotated bibliography includes complete bibliographic information about a work (author, title, place of publication, publisher, and publication date) followed by a brief description or evaluation of what the work contains. The following is an annotation of a book on style and format:

> Sabin, William A. *The Gregg Reference Manual: A Manual of Style, Grammar, Usage, and Formatting*. 11th ed. New York: McGraw Hill, 2011.
>
> The eleventh edition of this standard 736-page office guide "is intended for anyone who writes, edits, or prepares material for distribution or publication" (p. xiii). The book includes a section titled "How to Look Things Up," which provides a reference to the *GRM* Web site. Part 1, "Grammar, Usage, and Style," contains 11 sections on topics such as punctuation, abbreviations, spelling, and usage. Part 2, "Techniques and Formats," contains seven sections on such topics as proofreading, correspondence (letters, memos, and e-mail), and other elements of manuscript preparation. Part 3, "References," includes two appendixes that cover grammatical terms and pronunciation problems and a reference to additional appendixes at www.gregg.com that treat rules for alphabetic filing and a glossary of computer terms.

blogs and forums

A *blog* (from *Web log*) is a Web-based journal in which an individual or group of "bloggers" can post entries (displayed from the most recent to the earliest posting) that document experiences, express opinions, provide information, and respond to other bloggers on subjects of mutual interest. Although blogs may allow readers to post comments, a *forum* typically fosters a wider "conversation" in which contributors can not only respond to the posts of others but also begin new topics or discussion threads. Blogs and forums may overlap or combine features. If your Web site features a blog or forum, keep it current in order to build an **audience** and to maintain the credibility of your site.

Organizational Uses

Organizations create blogs and forums to help meet such goals as attracting and retaining clients or customers, promoting goodwill, obtaining valuable feedback on their products and services, and even developing a sense of community among their customers and employees. Blogs and forums can be both external and internal.

External sites are publicly available on the Internet both for an organization's customers or clients and for executives, spokespeople, or employees to share their views. Blogs and forums can help to build loyalty for a company because customers can make a direct connection with an organization's representatives or can exchange current information that may not be available in published documents and on Web sites. *Internal sites* are usually created for an organization's employees and can be accessed only through its intranet. Internal blogs may serve as interactive **newsletters** that help build a sense of community within an organization. See also **writing for the Web**.

Writing Style

Write blog or forum entries in an informal, conversational **style** that uses **contractions**, first **person**, and active **voice**.

BLOG POSTING	Check out the latest concept for our new dashboards — we've added enough space to hold your Starbucks coffee and your iPod by moving the air ducts to. . . . Tell us what you think. [Blog posting could be a paragraph or more.]
FORUM POSTING	I'm new, but I'm surprised no one's discussed the issue of repair costs. Have I missed something? [Forum postings tend to be more brief than blogs.]

B

Keep your sentences and paragraphs concise. Use bulleted **lists**, **italics**, and other **layout and design** elements, such as boldface and white space if possible. Doing so can help readers scan the postings or text to find information that is interesting or relevant to them. Keep headlines short and direct to catch attention and increase the visual appeal and readability. Where helpful, provide links to other sites and resources that participants might find useful. When blogs expand or forums become popular, you may need to organize them using *categories* (links to discussion topics) or *tags* (searchable labels for postings).

WEB LINK	Developing blogs and forums
Google Blogger (www.blogger.com) and Google Groups (groups.google.com) provide help in finding and developing blogs and forums. For more examples of blogs and forums, see ***bedfordstmartins.com/alred*** and select *Links for Handbook Entries*.	

❖ ETHICS NOTE Because organizations expect employees to assume full responsibility for the content they post on a company blog or forum, you must maintain high ethical standards.

- Do not post information that is confidential, proprietary, or sensitive to your employer.
- Do not attack competitors or use abusive language toward other participants while making strong points on topics.
- Do not post content that is profane, libelous, or harassing, or that violates the privacy of others. See also **biased language**.
- Obtain permission before using any material that is protected by **copyright**, and identify sources for **quotations**. See also **plagiarism**. ❖

both . . . and

Statements using the *both . . . and* construction should always be balanced grammatically and logically. See also **parallel structure**.

► To succeed in engineering, you must be able *both* to develop writing skills *and* ~~mastering~~ *to master* mathematics.

brackets

The primary use of brackets ([ ]) is to enclose a word or words inserted by the writer or editor into a quotation.

- The text stated, "Hypertext systems can be categorized as either modest [not modifiable] or robust [modifiable]."

Brackets are used to set off a parenthetical item within parentheses.

- We must credit Emanuel Foose (and his brother Emilio [1932–2002]) for founding the institute.

Brackets are also used to insert the Latin word *sic*, indicating that a writer has quoted material exactly as it appears in the original, even though it contains a misspelled or wrongly used word. See also **scholarly abbreviations** and **quotations**.

- The contract states, "Tinted windows will be installed to protect against son [*sic*] damage."

brainstorming

Brainstorming, a form of free association used to generate ideas about a topic, can be done individually or in groups. Brainstorming can stimulate creative thinking and reveal fresh perspectives and new connections. When brainstorming alone, jot down as many random ideas as you can think of about the topic. When working in a group, designate a person to note ideas the group suggests. Do not stop to analyze ideas or hold back looking for only the "best" ideas; just note everything that comes to mind. After compiling a list of initial ideas, ask *what*, *when*, *who*, *where*, *how*, and *why* for each idea, then list additional details that those questions bring to mind. When you run out of ideas, analyze each one you recorded, discarding those that are redundant. Then group the remaining items in the most logical order, based on your **purpose** and the needs of the **audience** to create a tentative **outline** of the document. Although the outline will be sketchy and incomplete, it will show where further brainstorming or research is needed and provide a framework for any new details that additional research yields. (See **outlining**.)

Many writers find a technique called *clustering* (also called *mind mapping*), as shown in Figure B–1, helpful in recording and organizing ideas created during a brainstorming session. To cluster, begin with a blank sheet of paper or a flip chart. Think of a key term that best

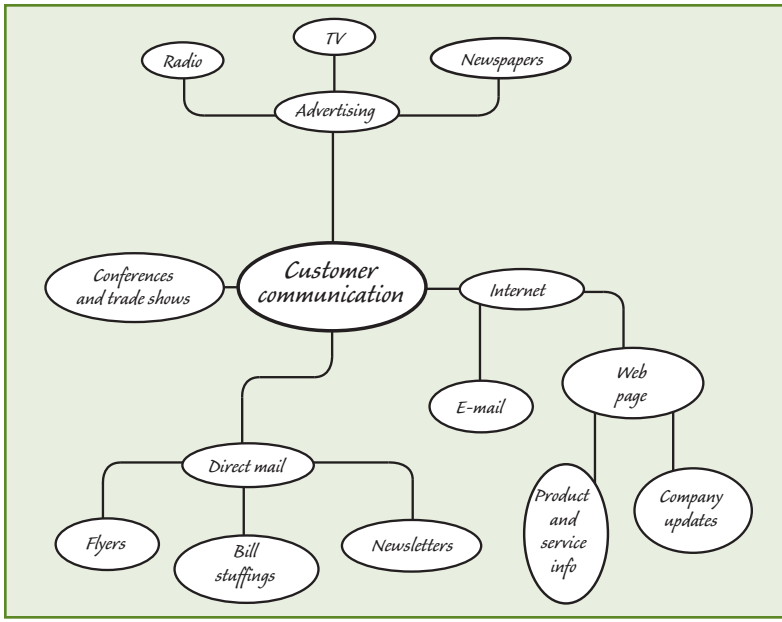


FIGURE B–1. Cluster Map from a Brainstorming Session

characterizes your topic and put it in a circle at the center of the paper. Figure B–1 shows brainstorming about the best way to communicate with customers, so that topic could be "Customer communication." Then think of subtopics most closely related to the main topic. In Figure B–1, the main topic ("Customer communication") might lead to such subtopics as "Advertising," "Internet," and "Direct mail." Draw circles or boxes around the subtopics, connecting each to the center circle, like spokes to a wheel hub. Repeat the exercise for each subtopic. In Figure B–1, for example, the subtopic "Internet" could stimulate additional subtopics such as "E-mail" and "Web page." Continue the process until you exhaust all possible ideas. The resulting "map" will show clusters of terms grouped around the central concept from which you can create a topic outline.

brochures

Brochures are printed publications that promote the products and services offered by a business or that promote the image of a business or an organization by providing general or specific technical information

important to a target **audience**. The goal of a brochure is to inform or to persuade or to do both. See also **persuasion**.

Types of Brochures

The two major types of brochures are sales brochures and informational brochures. *Sales brochures* are created specifically to sell a company's products and services. A technically oriented sales brochure can promote the performance data of various models of a product or list the benefits or capabilities of different types of equipment available for specific jobs. For example, the brochure of a microwave oven manufacturer might describe the various models and their accessories and how the ovens are to be installed over stove tops. *Informational brochures* are created to inform and to educate the reader as well as to promote goodwill and to raise the profile of an organization. For example, an informational brochure for a pesticide company might show the reader how to identify various types of pests like silverfish and termites, detail the damage they can do, and explain how to protect your home from them.

Designing the Brochure

Before you begin to write, determine the specific **purpose** of the brochure — to provide information about a service? to sell a product? You must also identify your target audience — general reader? expert? potential or existing client? Understanding your purpose, audience, and **context** is essential to creating content and a design that will be both appropriate and persuasive to your target audience. To help you develop an effective design and to stimulate your thinking, gather sample brochures for products or services similar to yours.

Cover Panel. The main goal of the cover panel is to gain the audience's attention. It should clearly identify the organization or product being promoted and provide a carefully selected visual image or headline geared toward the interest of the audience. Keep the amount of text to a minimum — for example, a statement about the organization's mission and success or a brief promotional quotation from a satisfied customer. Figure B–2 shows the cover panel of a brochure produced by the National Cancer Institute, which hopes to attract health-care professionals to an online course on conducting clinical trials in their practices. The cover photo features a health-care professional who appears to be counseling a patient; the text briefly defines the course, provides a Web address, and identifies the sponsoring organization.

First Inside Panel. The first inside panel of a brochure should again identify the organization and attract the reader with headlines and brief, readable content, such as that used in advertising. The first inside panel of the National Cancer Institute brochure uses boldface **headings** to highlight brief descriptions of the course and those participants who may benefit.

Subsequent Panels. Subsequent panels should describe the product or service with the reader's needs in mind, clearly stating the benefits and solutions to problems that your product or service offers. Include relevant and accurate supporting facts and **visuals**, such as **photographs** and cutaway **drawings**. You might further establish credibility with a brief company or product history or with a list of current clients or testimonials. Use subheadings and bulleted **lists** to break up the text and highlight key points. In the final panel, be clear about the action you want the reader to take, such as calling to order the product or visiting a Web site for more information. In Figure B–3, the second inside panel describes the course objectives and tells readers how to register.

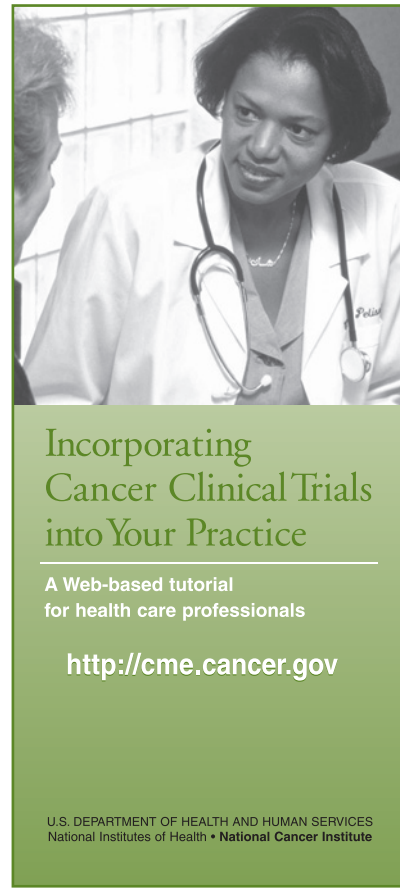


FIGURE B–2. Brochure (Cover Panel)

Design Style and Unity. Develop a style that unifies and complements the content of your brochure, and use it consistently throughout. For example, a brochure for a cruise line would feature many attractive photos of passengers and scenery. A brochure related to a serious medical subject, as in Figures B–2 and B–3, might use images of professionals in workplace settings. See also **layout and design**.

What is "Incorporating Cancer Clinical Trials Into Your Practice"?

It's a free Web-based tutorial for health care professionals that emphasizes the importance of participating in cancer clinical trials, either through patient referral or becoming a clinical trials investigator.

The course begins with a brief overview of cancer clinical trials and explains ways one can become involved in clinical trials. It continues with practical information and guidance for professionals interested in referring patients to, or conducting, clinical trials.

Participants will hear from experienced clinicians about some of the issues they have faced and how these issues were addressed.

Who should take this course?

The course is designed for health care professionals who are new to the clinical trials process, including oncologists, family physicians, internists, nurses, and other clinical staff. Specifically, it is for those clinicians that are referring patients to cancer clinical trials for the first time, and clinical research staff who are new to conducting clinical trials in their practices.

What are the course objectives?

At the end of the course, participants should be able to:

- Describe the role of clinical research in advancing cancer care
- Explain how clinical trials are conducted
- Describe the sponsorship of clinical trials
- Demonstrate how to locate clinical trials
- Understand how clinical trial sites are set up, staffed, and funded
- Make successful patient referrals to clinical trials
- Know how a physician may become a cancer clinical trials investigator
- Understand regulatory, record keeping, and reporting requirements in conducting clinical trials
- Identify key issues in communication among the patient, referring clinician, and clinical trials investigator

To register for this course, go to **http://cme.cancer.gov**, where you will be given further instructions.

Participants may receive continuing medical education (CME) credits or contact hours for course completion.

FIGURE B–3. Brochure (Inside Panels of Brochure in Figure B–2)

WRITER'S CHECKLIST **Designing a Brochure**

- ✔ Collect other brochures to stimulate your thinking as you consider the goals, content, and design for your brochure.
- ✔ Create a rough sketch that maps out the content of each panel to help you select visuals, color schemes, and the number of panels.
- ✔ Experiment with margins, spacing, and the arrangement and amount of text on each panel; make appropriate changes to content or length and allow adequate white space for readability.

(*continued*)

WRITER'S CHECKLIST **Designing a Brochure** (*continued*)

- ✔ Experiment with fonts and formatting, such as enlarging the first letter of the first word in a paragraph, but do not overuse unusual fonts or alternative styles, such as running type vertically.
- ✔ Consider color choices: black and white, which is cheaper than color, can be effective; in some circumstances, however, color is a must.
- ✔ Evaluate the impact of the design with your content. Have you adequately considered the needs of your audience?
- ✔ Consider using a professional printer and high-quality paper, depending on your budget and the scale of your project.

WEB LINK **Sample Brochures**

For links to Web sites with sample brochures, see ***bedfordstmartins.com/alred*** and select *Links for Handbook Entries*.

bulleted lists (*see* lists)

buzzwords

Buzzwords are words or phrases that suddenly become popular and, because of an intense period of overuse, lose their freshness and preciseness. They may become popular through their association with technology, popular culture, or even sports. See also **jargon**.

- interface [as a **verb**] win-win F2F meeting
  impact [as a verb] 24/7 data dump
  cyberslackers dot-com action items

Obviously, the words in this example are appropriate when used in the right **context**.

- We must establish an *interface* between the computer and the satellite hardware.
  [*Interface* is appropriately used as a **noun**.]

When writers needlessly shift from the normal function of a word, however, they often create a buzzword that is imprecise.

- We must ~~interface~~ *cooperate* with the Radiology Department.
  [*Interface* is inappropriately used as a verb; *cooperate* is more precise.]

We include such words in our vocabulary because they *seem* to give force and vitality to our language. Actually, buzzwords often sound like an **affectation** in technical writing. See also **word choice**.

WEB LINK	Buzzwords
Former newspaper editor John Walston offers BuzzWhack, a light-hearted Web site "dedicated to demystifying buzzwords." See ***bedfordstmartins.com/alred*** and select *Links for Handbook Entries*.	

C

can / may

In writing, *can* refers to capability ("I *can* have the project finished today"). *May* refers to possibility ("I *may* be in Boston on Monday") or permission ("*May* I leave early?").

cannot

Cannot is one word.

- We ~~can not~~ *cannot* meet the deadline specified in the contract.

capitalization

DIRECTORY

Proper Nouns 62
Common Nouns 63
First Words 63
Specific Groups 63
Specific Places 63
Specific Institutions, Events, Concepts 64
Titles of Works 64
Professional and Personal Titles 64
Abbreviations and Letters 65
Miscellaneous Capitalizations 65

The use of capital, or uppercase, letters is determined by custom. Capital letters are used to call attention to certain words, such as proper **nouns** and the first word of a sentence. Use capital letters carefully because they can affect a word's meaning (march / March, china / China) and because a spell checker would fail to identify such an error.

Proper Nouns

Capitalize proper nouns that name specific persons, places, or things (Pat Wilde, Peru, Technical Writing 205, Microsoft). Proper nouns that form other **parts of speech** are often capitalized (Keynesian eco-

nomics, Boolean function, Balkanize), but you should check a current **dictionary**.

Common Nouns

Common nouns name general classes or categories of people, places, things, concepts, or qualities rather than specific ones and are not capitalized (person, country, technical writing class, company).

First Words

The first letter of the first word in a sentence is always capitalized. ("Of the plans submitted, ours is best.") The first word after a **colon** is capitalized when the colon introduces two or more sentences (independent **clauses**) or if the colon precedes a statement requiring special emphasis.

- The meeting will address only one issue: What is the firm's role in environmental protection?

If a subordinate element follows the colon or if the thought is closely related, use a lowercase letter following the colon.

- We kept working for one reason: the approaching deadline.

The first word of a complete sentence in **quotation marks** is capitalized.

- Albert Einstein stated, "Imagination is more important than knowledge."

The first word in the salutation (Dear Mr. Smith:) and complimentary close (Sincerely yours,) are capitalized, as are the names of the recipients. See also **letters**.

Specific Groups

Capitalize the names of ethnic groups, religions, and nationalities (Native American, Christianity, Mongolian). Do not capitalize the names of social and economic groups (middle class, unemployed).

Specific Places

Capitalize the names of all political divisions (Ward Six, Chicago, Cook County, Illinois) and geographic divisions (Europe, Asia, North America, the Middle East). Do not capitalize geographic features unless they are part of a proper name.

- The mountains in some areas, such as the *Great Smoky Mountains*, make radio transmission difficult.

The words *north*, *south*, *east*, and *west* are capitalized when they refer to sections of the country. They are not capitalized when they refer to directions.

- I may relocate further *west*, but my family will remain in the *South*.

Capitalize the names of stars, constellations, and planets (North Star, Andromeda, Saturn). Do not capitalize *earth*, *sun*, and *moon* except when they are referred to formally as astronomical bodies.

- My workday was so long that I saw the *sun* rise over the lake and the *moon* appear as darkness settled over the *earth*.
- The various effects of the *Sun* on *Earth* and the *Moon* were discussed at the symposium.

Specific Institutions, Events, Concepts

Capitalize the names of institutions, organizations, and associations (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services). An organization usually capitalizes the names of its internal divisions and departments (Aeronautics Division, Human Resources Department). Types of organizations are not capitalized unless they are part of an official name (a technical communication association; Society for Technical Communication). Capitalize historical events (the Great Depression of the 1930s). Capitalize words that designate holidays, specific periods of time, months, or days of the week (Labor Day, the Renaissance, January, Monday). Do not capitalize seasons of the year (spring, summer, autumn, winter).

Capitalize the scientific names of classes, families, and orders but not the names of species or English derivatives of scientific names (Mammalia / mammal, Carnivora / carnivorous).

Titles of Works

Capitalize the initial letters of the first, last, and major words in the title of a book, an article, a play, or a film. Do not capitalize **articles** (*a*, *an*, *the*), coordinating **conjunctions** (*and*, *but*), or **prepositions** unless they begin or end the title (*The Lives of a Cell*). Capitalize prepositions within **titles** when they contain five or more letters (*Between*, *Within*, *Until*, *After*), unless you are following a style that recommends otherwise. The same rules apply to the subject lines of **e-mails** or **memos**.

Professional and Personal Titles

Titles preceding proper names are capitalized (Ms. Berger, Senator Lieberman). Appositives following proper names normally are not capi-

talized (Joseph Lieberman, *senator* from Connecticut). However, the word *president* is often capitalized when it refers to the chief executive of a national government. See **appositives**.

Job titles used with personal names are capitalized (Ho-shik Kim, *Laboratory Director*). Job titles used without personal names are not capitalized. ("The *laboratory director* will meet us tomorrow.") Use capital letters to designate family relationships only when they occur before a name (my uncle, Uncle Fred).

Abbreviations and Letters

Capitalize **abbreviations** if the words they stand for would be capitalized, such as BSChE (Bachelor of Science in Chemical Engineering). Capitalize letters that serve as names or indicate shapes (vitamin B, T-square, U-turn, I-beam).

Miscellaneous Capitalizations

The first word of a complete sentence enclosed in **dashes**, **brackets**, or **parentheses** is not capitalized when it appears as part of another sentence.

- We must improve our safety record this year (accidents last year were up 10 percent).

Certain units, such as parts and chapters of books and rooms in buildings, when specifically identified by number, are capitalized (Chapter 5, Ch. 5; Room 72, Rm. 72). Minor divisions within such units are not capitalized unless they begin a sentence (page 11, verse 14, seat 12).

case

DIRECTORY

Subjective Case 66
Objective Case 67
Possessive Case 67
Appositives 68
Determining the Case of Pronouns 68

Grammatical case indicates the functional relationship of a **noun** or a **pronoun** to the other words in a sentence. Nouns change form only in the possessive case; pronouns may show change for the subjective, the objective, or the possessive case.

The case of a noun or pronoun is always determined by its function in a **phrase**, **clause**, or sentence. If it is the subject of a phrase, clause, or

SINGULAR	SUBJECTIVE	OBJECTIVE	POSSESSIVE
First person	I	me	my, mine
Second person	you	you	your, yours
Third person	he, she, it	him, her, it	his, her, hers, its
PLURAL	**SUBJECTIVE**	**OBJECTIVE**	**POSSESSIVE**
First person	we	us	our, ours
Second person	you	you	your, yours
Third person	they	them	their, theirs

FIGURE C–1. Pronoun-Case Chart

sentence, it is in the subjective case; if it is an **object** in a phrase, clause, or sentence, it is in the objective case; if it reflects possession or ownership and modifies a noun, it is in the possessive case. Figure C–1 is a table of pronouns in the subjective, objective, and possessive cases. See also **sentence construction**.

The subjective case can indicate the person or thing acting ("*He* sued the vendor"), the person or thing acted upon ("*He* was sued by the vendor"), or the topic of description ("*He* is the vendor"). The objective case can indicate the thing acted on ("The vendor sued *him*") or the person or thing acting but in the objective position ("The vendor was sued by *him*"). (See also **voice**.) The possessive case indicates the person or thing owning or possessing something ("It was *his* company"). See also **modifiers**.

Subjective Case

A pronoun is in the subjective case (also called *nominative case*) when it represents the person or thing acting or is the receiver of the action even though it is in the subject position.

- *I* wrote a proposal.
- *I* was praised for my proposal writing.

A linking **verb** links a pronoun to its antecedent to show that they identify the same thing. Because they represent the same thing, the pronoun is in the subjective case even when it follows the verb, which makes it a subjective complement.

- *He* is the head of the Quality Control Group. [subject]
- The head of the Quality Control Group is *he*. [subjective complement]

The subjective case is used after the words *than* and *as* because of the understood (although unstated) portion of the clauses in which those words appear.

- George is as good a designer as *I* [am].
- Our subsidiary can do the job better than *we* [can].

Objective Case

A pronoun is in the objective case (also called the *accusative case*) when it indicates the person or thing receiving the action that is expressed by a verb in the active voice.

- They selected *me* to attend the conference.

Pronouns that follow action verbs (which excludes all forms of the verb *be*) must be in the objective case. Do not be confused by an additional name.

- The company promoted *me* in July.
- The company promoted John and *me* in July.

A pronoun is in the objective case when it is the object of a gerund or **preposition** or the subject of an infinitive.

- Between *you* and *me*, his facts are questionable. [objects of a preposition]
- Many of *us* attended the conference. [object of a preposition]
- Training *him* was the best thing I could have done. [object of a gerund]
- We asked *them* to return the deposit. [subject of an infinitive]

English does not differentiate between direct objects and indirect objects; both require the objective form of the pronoun. See also **complements**.

- The interviewer seemed to like *me*. [direct object]
- They wrote *me* a letter. [indirect object]

Possessive Case

A noun or pronoun is in the possessive case when it represents a person, place, or thing that possesses something. To make a singular noun possessive, add *'s* (the *manufacturer's* robotic inventory system). With plural nouns that end in *s*, show the possessive by placing an apostrophe

after the *s* that forms the plural (a *managers'* meeting). For other guidelines, see **possessive case**.

Appositives

An **appositive** is a noun or noun phrase that follows and amplifies another noun or noun phrase. Because it has the same grammatical function as the noun it complements, an appositive should be in the same case as the noun with which it is in apposition.

- Two nurses, Jim Knight and *I*, were asked to review the patient's chart. [subjective case]
- The group leader selected two members to represent the department—Mohan Pathak and *me*. [objective case]

Determining the Case of Pronouns

One test to determine the proper case of a pronoun is to try it with some transitive verb such as *resembled* or *hit*. If the pronoun would logically precede the verb, use the subjective case; if it would logically follow the verb, use the objective case.

- *She* [*He*, *They*] resembled her father. [subjective case]
- Angela resembled *him* [*her*, *them*]. [objective case]

In the following example, try omitting the noun to determine the case of the pronoun.

SENTENCE	(*We* / *Us*) pilots fly our own airplanes.
INCORRECT	*Us* fly our own airplanes. [This incorrect usage is obviously wrong.]
CORRECT	*We* fly our own airplanes. [This correct usage sounds right.]

To determine the case of a pronoun that follows *as* or *than*, mentally add the words that are omitted but understood.

- The other technical writer is not paid as well as *she* [is paid].
  [You would not write, "*Her* is paid."]
- His partner was better informed than *he* [was informed].
  [You would not write, "*Him* was informed."]

If pronouns in compound constructions cause problems, try using them singly to determine the proper case.

SENTENCE (*We* / *Us*) and the clients are going to lunch.

CORRECT *We* are going to lunch.
[You would not write, "*Us* are going to lunch."]

For advice on when to use *who* and *whom*, see **who / whom**.

cause-and-effect method of development

The cause-and-effect **method of development** is a common strategy to explain why something happened or why you think something will happen. The goal of the cause-and-effect method of development is to make as plausible as possible the relationship between a situation and either its cause or its effect. The conclusions you draw about the relationships should be based on evidence you have gathered. Like all methods, this one is often used in combination with others. If you were examining a problem with multiple causes, for example, you might combine cause-and-effect with **order-of-importance method of development** as you examine each cause and its effect.

Evaluating Evidence

Because not all evidence you gather will be of equal value, keep in mind the following guidelines:

- *Your facts and arguments should be relevant to your topic*. Be careful not to draw a conclusion that your evidence does not lead to or support. You may have researched some statistics, for example, showing that an increasing number of Americans are licensed to fly small airplanes. You cannot use that information as evidence for a decrease in new car sales in the United States—the evidence does not lead to that conclusion.
- *Your evidence should be adequate*. Incomplete evidence can lead to false conclusions.
  - ► Driver-training classes do not help prevent auto accidents. Two people I know who completed driver-training classes were involved in accidents.

  A thorough investigation of the usefulness of driver-training classes in keeping down the accident rate would require more than one or two examples. It would require a systematic comparison of the driving records for a representative sample of drivers who had completed driver training and those who had not.

- *Your evidence should be representative.* If you conduct a survey to obtain your evidence, do not solicit responses only from individuals or groups whose views are identical to yours; be sure you obtain responses from a diverse population.
- *Your evidence should be demonstrable.* Two events that occur close to each other in time or place may or may not be causally related. For example, that new traffic signs were placed at an intersection and the next day an accident occurred does not necessarily prove that the signs caused the accident. You must demonstrate the relationship between the two events with pertinent facts and arguments. See **logic errors**.

Linking Causes to Effects

To show a true relationship between a cause and an effect, you must demonstrate that the existence of the one *requires* the existence of the other. It is often difficult to establish beyond any doubt that one event was the cause of another event. More often, a result will have more than one cause. As you research a subject, your task is to determine which cause or causes are most plausible.

When several probable causes are equally valid, report your findings accordingly, as in the following excerpt from an article on the use of an energy-saving device called a furnace-vent damper. The damper is a metal plate that fits inside the flue or vent pipe of a natural-gas or fuel-oil furnace to allow poisonous gases to escape up the flue. Tests run on several dampers showed a number of probable causes for their malfunctioning.

> One damper was sold without proper installation instructions, and another was wired incorrectly. Two of the units had slow-opening dampers (15 seconds) that prevented the [furnace] burner from firing. And one damper jammed when exposed to a simulated fuel temperature of more than 700 degrees.
>
> —Don DeBat, "Save Energy but Save Your Life, Too," *Family Safety*

The investigator located more than one cause of damper malfunctions and reported on them. Without such a thorough account, recommendations to prevent malfunctions would be based on incomplete evidence.

center on

Use the phrase *center on* in writing, not *center around*. ("The experiments *center on* the new discovery.") Often the idea intended by *center on* is better expressed by other words.

- The hearings on computer security ~~centered on~~ *dealt with* access codes.

chronological method of development

The chronological **method of development** arranges the events under discussion in sequential order, emphasizing time as it begins with the first event and continues chronologically to the last. **Trip reports**, **progress reports**, work schedules, some **minutes of meetings**, and certain **trouble reports** are among the types of writing in which information is organized chronologically. Chronological order is typically used in **narration**.

The trouble report shown in Figure C–2 describes the development of a fire at an industrial facility. After providing important background information, the writer presents both the events and the steps taken in chronological order.

cite / sight / site

Cite means "acknowledge" or "quote an authority." ("The speaker *cited* several ecology experts.") *Sight* is the ability to see. ("He feared that he might lose his *sight*.") *Site* is a plot of land (a construction *site*) or the place where something is located (a Web *site*).

clarity

Clarity is essential to effective communication with your **readers**. You cannot achieve your **purpose** or a goal like **persuasion** without clarity. Many factors contribute to clarity, just as many other elements can defeat it.

A logical **method of development** and an outline will help you avoid presenting your reader with a jumble of isolated thoughts. A method of development and an outline that puts your thoughts into a logical,

C

Memorandum

To: Charles Artmier, Chairman, Safety Committee

From: Willard Ricke, Plant Superintendent, Sequoia Plant WR

Date: November 17, 2011

Subject: Fire at Our Sequoia Plant in Ardville

The following description provides an account of the conditions and development of the fire at our Sequoia Plant in Ardville. Because this description will be incorporated into the report that the Safety Committee will prepare, please let me know if any details should be added or clarified.

Three piles of scrap paper were located about 100 feet south of Building A and 150 feet west of Building B at our Sequoia Chemical Plant in Ardville. Building A, which consisted of one story and a partial attic, was used in part as an electrical shop and in part for equipment storage. Six pallets of Class I flammable liquids in 55-gallon drums were temporarily stored just outside Building A, along its west wall.

A spark created in the electrical shop in Building A started a fire. The night watchman first noticed the fire in the electrical shop about 6:00 a.m. and immediately called the fire department and the plant superintendent. Before the fire department arrived, the fire spread to the drums of flammable liquid just outside the west wall and quickly engulfed Building A in flames. The fire then spread to the scrap paper outside, with a 40 mph wind blowing it in the direction of Building B.

During this time, the watchman began to hose down the piles of scrap paper between the buildings to try to keep the fire from reaching Building B. He also set up lawn sprinklers between the fire and Building B as part of his attempt to protect Building B from the fire. However, he saw smoke coming from Building B at 6:15 a.m., in spite of his best efforts to protect it.

The volunteer fire department, which was 20 miles away, reached the scene at 6:57 a.m., nearly an hour after the fire was discovered. It is estimated that the fire department's pumps were started after the fire had been burning in Building B for at least 20 minutes. . . .

FIGURE C–2. Chronological Method of Development

meaningful sequence brings **coherence** as well as **unity** to your writing. Clear **transition** contributes to clarity by providing the smooth flow that enables the reader to connect your thoughts with one another without conscious effort. See also **outlining**.

Proper **emphasis** and **subordination** are mandatory if you want to achieve clarity. If you do not use those two complementary techniques wisely, all your clauses and sentences will appear to be of equal importance. Your reader will only be able to guess which are most important, which are least important, and which fall somewhere in between. The **pace** at which you present your ideas is also important to clarity; if the pace is not carefully adjusted to both the topic and the reader, your writing will appear cluttered and unclear.

Point of view establishes through whose eyes or from what vantage point the reader views the subject. A consistent point of view is essential to clarity; if you inappropriately switch from the first person to the third person in midsentence, you are certain to confuse your reader.

Precise **word choice** contributes to clarity and helps eliminate **ambiguity** and **awkwardness**. **Vague words**, **clichés**, poor use of **idiom**, and inappropriate **usage** detract from clarity. That **conciseness** is a requirement of clearly written communication should be evident to anyone who has ever attempted to decipher an insurance policy or a legal contract. For the sake of clarity, remove unnecessary words from your writing. See also **plain English**.

clauses

A clause is a group of words that contains a subject and a predicate and that functions as a sentence or as part of a sentence. (See **sentence construction**.) Every subject-predicate word group in a sentence is a clause, and every sentence must contain at least one independent clause; otherwise, it is a **sentence fragment**.

A clause that could stand alone as a simple sentence is an *independent clause*. ("*The scaffolding fell* when the rope broke.") A clause that could not stand alone if the rest of the sentence were deleted is a *dependent* (or *subordinate*) *clause*. ("I was at the St. Louis branch *when the decision was made*.")

Dependent (or subordinate) clauses are useful in making the relationship between thoughts clearer and more succinct than if the ideas were presented in a series of simple sentences or compound sentences.

FRAGMENTED The recycling facility is located between Millville and Darrtown. Both villages use it. [The two thoughts are of approximately equal importance.]

C

SUBORDINATED	The recycling facility, *which is located between Millville and Darrtown*, is used by both villages. [One thought is subordinated to the other.]

Subordinate clauses are especially effective for expressing thoughts that describe or explain another statement. Too much **subordination**, however, can be confusing and foster wordiness. See also **conciseness**.

- He selected instructors whose classes ~~had a slant that was~~ were specifically designed for ~~students who intended to go into engineering.~~ engineering students.

A clause can be connected with the rest of its sentence by a coordinating **conjunction**, a subordinating conjunction, a relative **pronoun**, or a conjunctive **adverb**.

- It was 500 miles to the facility, *so* we made arrangements to fly. [coordinating conjunction]
- Drivers will need to be alert *because* snow may cause hazardous conditions near the entrance to the warehouse. [subordinating conjunction]
- Robert M. Fano was the scientist *who* developed the earliest multiple-access computer system at MIT. [relative pronoun]
- We arrived in the evening; *nevertheless*, we began the tour of the facility. [conjunctive adverb]

clichés

Clichés are expressions that have been used for so long they are no longer fresh but come to mind easily because they are so familiar. Clichés are often wordy as well as vague and can be confusing, especially to speakers of **English as a second language**. A better, more direct word or phrase is given for each of the following clichés.

INSTEAD OF	USE
all over the map	scattered, unfocused
the game plan	strategy, schedule
last but not least	last, finally

Some writers use clichés in a misguided attempt to appear casual or spontaneous, just as other writers try to impress readers with **buzzwords**. Although clichés may come to mind easily while you are **writing a draft**, eliminate them during **revision**. See also **affectation**, **conciseness**, and **international correspondence**.

coherence

Writing is coherent when the relationships among ideas are clear to readers. The major components of coherent writing are a logical sequence of related ideas and clear transitions between these ideas. See also **clarity** and **organization**.

Presenting ideas in a logical sequence is the most important requirement in achieving coherence. The key to achieving a logical sequence is the use of a good outline. (See **outlining**.) An outline forces you to establish a beginning, a middle, and an end. That structure contributes greatly to coherence by enabling you to experiment with sequences and lay out the most direct route to your **purpose** without digressing.

Thoughtful **transition** is also essential; without it, your writing cannot achieve the smooth flow from sentence to sentence and **paragraph** to paragraph that results in coherence.

Check your draft carefully for coherence during **revision**. If possible, have someone else review your draft for how well it expresses the relationships between ideas. See also **unity**.

collaborative writing

Collaborative writing occurs when two or more writers work together to produce a single document for which they share responsibility and decision-making authority. Collaborative writing teams are formed when (1) the size of a project or the time constraints imposed on it require collaboration, (2) the project involves multiple areas of expertise, or (3) the project requires the melding of divergent views into a single perspective that is acceptable to the whole team or to another group. Many types of collaborations are possible, from the collaboration of a primary writer with a variety of contributors and reviewers to a highly interactive collaboration in which everyone on a team plays a relatively equal role in shaping the document.

DIGITAL TIP

Using Collaborative Software

Collaborative writing software helps teams of students, employees, researchers, and others work together on a common writing task whether they are in the same office or in different countries. Modern word processors and collaborative systems like wikis permit team members to draft, review, edit, and comment on their collective work. These systems also make it easy to conduct live

(*continued*)

C

chat sessions for brainstorming ideas, share documents with new collaborators, track changes from one version of a document to the next, alert collaborators when a document is altered, and export documents for offline editing. For a list of software programs that support collaborative writing and tips for using these programs effectively, go to ***bedfordstmartins.com/alred*** and select *Digital Tips*, "Reviewing Collaborative Documents," "Using Collaborative Software," or "Using Wikis for Collaborative Work."

Tasks of the Collaborative Writing Team

The collaborating team strives to achieve a compatible working relationship by dividing the work in a way that uses each writer's expertise and experience to its advantage. The team should also designate a coordinator who will guide the team members' activities, organize the project, and ensure **coherence** and consistency within the document. The coordinator's duties can be determined by mutual agreement or, if the team often works together, assigned on a rotating basis.

Planning. The team conceptualizes the document to be produced as the members collectively identify the **audience**, **purpose**, **context**, and **scope** of the project. See also **meetings** and "Five Steps to Successful Writing" (page xv).

At this stage, the team establishes a project plan that may include guidelines for communication among team members, version control (naming, dating, and managing document drafts), review procedures, and writing **style** standards that team members are expected to follow. The plan includes a schedule with due dates for completing initial research tasks, outlines, drafts, reviews, revisions, and the final document.

◖ PROFESSIONALISM NOTE Deadlines must be met because team members rely on each other and one missed deadline can delay the entire project. A missed project deadline can result in a lost opportunity or, in the case of **grant proposals**, disqualify an application. Individual writers must adjust their schedules and focus on their own writing process to finish drafts and meet the deadline. See "Five Steps to Successful Writing" (page xv). ◗

Research and Writing. The team next completes initial **research** tasks, elicits comments from team members, creates a broad outline of the document (see **outlining**), and assigns writing tasks to individual team members, based on their expertise and the outline. Depending on the

project, each team member further researches an assigned segment of the document, expands and develops the broad outline, and produces a draft from a detailed outline. See also **writing a draft**.

Reviewing. Keeping the audience's needs and the document's purpose in mind, each team member critically yet diplomatically reviews the other team members' drafts, from the overall **organization** to the **clarity** of each **paragraph**, and offers advice to help improve the writer's work. Team members can easily solicit feedback by sharing electronic files. Tracking and commenting features allow the reviewer to show the suggested changes without deleting the original text.

Revising. In this final stage, individual writers evaluate their colleagues' reviews and accept, reject, or build on their suggestions. Then, the team coordinator can consolidate all drafts into a final master copy and maintain and evaluate it for consistency and coherence. See also **revision**.

PROFESSIONALISM NOTE As you collaborate, be ready to tolerate some disharmony, but temper it with mutual respect. Team members may not agree on every subject, and differing perspectives can easily lead to conflict, ranging from mild differences over minor points to major showdowns. However, creative differences resolved respectfully can energize the team and, in fact, strengthen a finished document by compelling writers to reexamine assumptions and issues in unanticipated ways. See also **listening**.

WRITER'S CHECKLIST **Writing Collaboratively**

- ✔ Designate one person as the team coordinator.
- ✔ Identify the audience, purpose, context, and scope of the project.
- ✔ Create a project plan, including a schedule and standards.
- ✔ Create a working outline of the document.
- ✔ Assign sections or tasks to each team member.
- ✔ Research and write drafts of each document section.
- ✔ Follow the schedule: due dates for drafts, revisions, and final versions.
- ✔ Use the agreed-upon standards for style and format.
- ✔ Exchange sections for team member reviews.
- ✔ Revise sections as needed.
- ✔ Meet the established deadlines.

colons

C

The colon (:) is a mark of introduction that alerts readers to the close connection between the preceding statement and what follows.

Colons in Sentences

A colon links independent **clauses** to words, **phrases**, clauses, or lists that identify, rename, explain, emphasize, amplify, or illustrate the sentence that precedes the colon.

- Two topics will be discussed: *the new lab design and the revised safety procedures*. [phrases that identify]
- Only one thing will satisfy Mr. Sturgess: *our finished report*. [appositive (renaming) phrase for **emphasis**]
- Any organization is confronted with two separate, though related, information problems: *It must maintain an effective internal communication system and an effective external communication system*. [clause to amplify and explain]
- Heart patients should make key lifestyle changes: *stop smoking, exercise regularly, eat a low-fat diet, and reduce stress*. [list to identify and illustrate]

Colons with Salutations, Titles, Citations, and Numbers

A colon follows the salutation in business **letters**, even when the salutation refers to a person by first name.

- Dear Professor Jeffers: *or* Dear Georgia:

Colons separate titles from subtitles and separate references to sections within works. See also **documenting sources**.

- *The Black Swan: The Impact of the Highly Improbable*
- Genesis 10:16 [chapter 10, verse 16]

Colons separate numbers in time references and indicate numerical ratios.

- 9:30 a.m. [9 hours and 30 minutes]
- The cement is mixed with water and sand at 5:3:1. [The colon is read as the word *to*.]

Punctuation and Capitalization with Colons

A colon always goes outside **quotation marks**.

- This was the real meaning of the manager's "suggestion": Cooperation within our department must improve.

As this example shows, the first word after a colon may be capitalized if the statement following the colon is a complete sentence and functions as a formal statement or question. If the element following the colon is subordinate, however, use a lowercase letter to begin that element. See also **capitalization**.

- We have only one way to stay within our present budget: to reduce expenditures for research and development.

Unnecessary Colons

Do not place a colon between a **verb** and its **objects**.

- Three fluids that clean pipettes are~~:~~ water, alcohol, and acetone.

Likewise, do not use a colon between a **preposition** and its object.

- I may be transferred to~~:~~ Tucson, Boston, or Miami.

Do not insert a colon after *including*, *such as*, or *for example* to introduce a simple list.

- Office computers should not be used for activities such as~~:~~ personal e-mail, Web surfing, Internet shopping, and playing computer games.

One common exception is made when a verb or preposition is followed by a stacked **list**; however, it may be possible to introduce the list with a complete sentence instead.

- *The following companies* :
  ~~Companies that~~ produce computers ~~include:~~

Apple	HP	Dell
Gateway	IBM	Sony

comma splice

A comma splice is a grammatical error in which two independent **clauses** are joined by only a **comma**.

INCORRECT It was 500 miles to the facility, we arranged to fly.

C

A comma splice can be corrected in several ways.

1. Substitute a **semicolon**, a semicolon and a conjunctive **adverb**, or a comma and a coordinating **conjunction**.
   - It was 500 miles to the facility; we arranged to fly. [semicolon]
   - It was 500 miles to the facility; *therefore*, we arranged to fly. [adverb]
   - It was 500 miles to the facility, *so* we arranged to fly. [conjunction]
2. Create two sentences.
   - It was 500 miles to the facility. *We* arranged to fly.
3. Subordinate one clause to the other. (See **subordination**.)
   - *Because it was 500 miles to the facility,* we arranged to fly.

See also **sentence construction** and **sentence faults**.

commas

DIRECTORY

Linking Independent Clauses 81
Enclosing Elements 81
Introducing Elements 82
Separating Items in a Series 83
Clarifying and Contrasting 84
Showing Omissions 84
Using with Numbers and Names 84
Using with Other Punctuation 85
Avoiding Unnecessary Commas 86

Like all **punctuation**, the comma (,) helps **readers** understand the writer's meaning and prevents **ambiguity**. Notice how the comma helps make the meaning clear in the second example.

AMBIGUOUS To be successful nurses with M.S. degrees must continue their education.

CLEAR To be successful, nurses with M.S. degrees must continue their education.
[The comma makes clear where the main part of the sentence begins.]

Do not follow the old myth that you should insert a comma wherever you would pause if you were speaking. Although you would pause wherever you encounter a comma, you should not insert a comma wherever you might pause. Effective use of commas depends on an understanding of **sentence construction**.

Linking Independent Clauses

Use a comma before a coordinating **conjunction** (*and*, *but*, *or*, *nor*, and sometimes *so*, *yet*, and *for*) that links independent **clauses**.

- The new microwave disinfection system was delivered, *but* the installation will require an additional week.

However, if two independent clauses are short and closely related—and there is no danger of confusing the reader—the comma may be omitted. Both of the following examples are correct.

- The cable snapped and the power failed.
- The cable snapped, and the power failed.

Enclosing Elements

Commas are used to enclose nonessential information in nonrestrictive clauses, **phrases**, and parenthetical elements. See also **restrictive and nonrestrictive elements**.

- Our new factory, *which began operations last month*, should add 25 percent to total output. [nonrestrictive clause]
- The technician, *working quickly and efficiently*, finished early. [nonrestrictive phrase]
- We can, *of course*, expect their lawyer to call us. [parenthetical element]

Yes and *no* are set off by commas in such uses as the following:

- I agree with you, *yes*.
- *No*, I do not think we can finish by the deadline.

A **direct address** should be enclosed in commas.

- You will note, *Jeff*, that the surface of the brake shoe complies with the specification.

An **appositive** phrase (which re-identifies another expression in the sentence) is enclosed in commas.

- Our company, *Envirex Medical Systems*, won several awards last year.

Interrupting parenthetical and transitional words or phrases are usually set off with commas. See also **transition**.

- The report, *therefore,* needs to be revised.

Commas are omitted when the word or phrase does not interrupt the continuity of thought.

- I *therefore* recommend that we begin construction.

For other means of punctuating parenthetical elements, see **dashes** and **parentheses**.

Introducing Elements

Clauses and Phrases. Generally, place a comma after an introductory clause or phrase, especially if it is long, to identify where the introductory element ends and the main part of the sentence begins.

- *Because of limited vaccine production for this year's strain of influenza,* we recommend that high-risk patients receive priority for available vaccine supplies.

A long modifying phrase that precedes the main clause should always be followed by a comma.

- *During the first series of field-performance tests at our Colorado proving ground,* the new engine failed to meet our expectations.

When an introductory phrase is short and closely related to the main clause, the comma may be omitted.

- *In two seconds* a 5°C temperature rise occurs in the test tube.

A comma should always follow an absolute phrase, which modifies the whole sentence.

- *The tests completed,* we organized the data for the final report.

Words and Quotations. Certain types of introductory words are followed by a comma. One example is a transitional word or phrase (*however*, *in addition*) that connects the preceding clause or sentence with the thought that follows.

- *Furthermore,* steel can withstand a humidity of 99 percent, provided that there is no chloride or sulfur dioxide in the atmosphere.
- *For example,* this change will make us more competitive in the global marketplace.

When an **adverb** closely modifies the **verb** or the entire sentence, it should not be followed by a comma.

- *Perhaps* we can still solve the turnover problem. *Certainly* we should try.
  [*Perhaps* and *certainly* closely modify each statement.]

A proper **noun** used in an introductory direct address is followed by a comma, as is an **interjection** (such as *oh*, *well*, *why*, *indeed*, *yes*, and *no*).

- *Nancy,* enclosed is the article you asked me to review. [direct address]
- *Indeed,* I will ensure that your request is forwarded. [interjection]

Use a comma to separate a direct **quotation** from its introduction.

- Morton and Lucia White *said,* "People live in cities but dream of the countryside."

Do not use a comma when giving an indirect quotation.

- Morton and Lucia White *said that* people dream of the countryside, even though they live in cities.

Separating Items in a Series

Although the comma before the last item in a series is sometimes omitted, it is generally clearer to include it.

- Random House, Bantam, Doubleday, and Dell were individual publishing companies. [Without the final comma, "Doubleday and Dell" might refer to one company or two.]

Phrases and clauses in coordinate series are also punctuated with commas.

- Plants absorb noxious gases, act as receptors of dirt particles, and cleanse the air of other impurities.

When phrases or clauses in a series contain commas, use **semicolons** rather than commas to separate the items.

- Our new products include amitriptyline, which has sold very well; and cholestyramine, which was just introduced.

When **adjectives** modifying the same noun can be reversed and make sense, or when they can be separated by *and* or *or*, they should be separated by commas.

- The aircraft featured a *modern, sleek, swept-wing* design.

When an adjective modifies a phrase, no comma is required.

- She was investigating the *damaged inventory-control system*. [The adjective *damaged* modifies the phrase *inventory-control system*.]

Never separate a final adjective from its noun.

- He is a conscientious, honest, reliable, worker.

Clarifying and Contrasting

Use a comma to separate two contrasting thoughts or ideas.

- The project was finished on time, but not within the budget.

Use a comma after an independent clause that is only loosely related to the dependent clause that follows it or that could be misread without the comma.

- I should be able to finish the plan by July, even though I lost time because of illness.

Showing Omissions

A comma sometimes replaces a verb in certain elliptical constructions.

- Some were punctual; *others, late*. [The comma replaces *were*.]

It is better, however, to avoid such constructions in technical writing.

Using with Numbers and Names

Commas are conventionally used to separate distinct items. Use commas between the elements of an address written on the same line (but not between the state and the ZIP Code).

- Kristen James, 4119 Mill Road, Dayton, Ohio 45401

A full date that is written in month-day-year format uses a comma preceding and following the year.

- November 30, 2025, is the payoff date.

Do not use commas for dates in the day-month-year format, which is used in many parts of the world and by the U.S. military. See also **international correspondence**.

- Note that 30 November 2025 is the payoff date.

Do not use commas when showing only the month and year or month and day in a **date**.

- The target date of May 2015 is optimistic, so I would like to meet on March 4 to discuss our options.

Use commas to separate the elements of Arabic numbers.

- 1,528,200 feet

However, because many countries use the comma as the decimal marker, use spaces or periods rather than commas in international documents.

- 1.528.200 meters *or* 1 528 200 meters

A comma may be substituted for the colon in the salutation of a personal **letter** or **e-mail**. Do not, however, use a comma in the salutation of a business letter or e-mail, even if you use the person's first name.

- Dear Marie, [personal letter or e-mail]
- Dear Marie: [business letter or e-mail]

Use commas to separate the elements of geographic names.

- Toronto, Ontario, Canada

Use a comma to separate names that are reversed (*Smith, Alvin*) and commas with professional **abbreviations**.

- Jim Rogers Jr., M.D., chaired the conference.
  [*Jr.* or *Sr.* does not require a comma.]

Using with Other Punctuation

Conjunctive adverbs (*however*, *nevertheless*, *consequently*, *for example*, *on the other hand*) that join independent clauses are preceded by a **semicolon** and followed by a comma. Such adverbs function both as **modifiers** and as connectives.

- The idea is good*; however,* our budget is not sufficient.

As shown earlier in this entry, use semicolons rather than commas to separate items in a series when the items themselves contain commas.

When a comma should follow a phrase or clause that ends with words in parentheses, the comma always appears outside the closing parenthesis.

- Although we left late (at 7:30 p.m.), we arrived in time for the keynote address.

Commas always go inside **quotation marks**.

- The operator placed the discharge bypass switch at "*normal*," which triggered a second discharge.

Except with abbreviations, a comma should not be used with a dash, an **exclamation mark**, a **period**, or a **question mark**.

- "Have you finished the project?," she asked.

Avoiding Unnecessary Commas

A number of common writing errors involve placing commas where they do not belong. As stated earlier, such errors often occur because writers assume that a pause in a sentence should be indicated by a comma.

Do not place a comma between a subject and verb or between a verb and its **object**.

- The conditions at the test site in the Arctic, made accurate readings difficult.
- She has often said, that one company's failure is another's opportunity.

Do not use a comma between the elements of a compound subject or compound predicate consisting of only two elements.

- The director of the design department, and the supervisor of the quality-control section were opposed to the new schedules.
- The design director listed five major objections, and asked that the new schedule be reconsidered.

Do not include a comma after a coordinating conjunction such as *and* or *but*.

- The chairperson formally adjourned the meeting, but, the members of the committee continued to argue.

Do not place a comma before the first item or after the last item of a series.

- The new products we are considering include, calculators, scanners, and cameras.
- It was a fast, simple, inexpensive, process.

Do not use a comma to separate a prepositional phrase from the rest of the sentence unnecessarily.

- We discussed the final report, on the new project.

compare / contrast

When you *compare* things, you point out similarities or both similarities and differences. ("He *compared* the two brands before making his choice.") When you *contrast* things, you point out only the differences. ("Their speaking styles *contrasted* sharply.") In either case, you compare or contrast only things that are part of a common category.

When *compare* is used to establish a general similarity, it is followed by *to*. ("He *compared* our receiving the grant *to* winning a marathon.") When *compare* is used to indicate a close examination of similarities or differences, it is followed by *with*. ("We *compared* the features of the new copier *with* those of the current one.")

Contrast is normally followed by *with*. ("The new policy *contrasts* sharply *with* the earlier one.") When the **noun** form of *contrast* is used, one speaks of the *contrast between* two things or of one thing being *in contrast to* the other.

- There is a sharp *contrast between* the old and new policies.
- The new policy is *in* sharp *contrast to* the earlier one.

comparison

When you are making a comparison, be sure that both or all of the elements being compared are clearly evident to your **reader**.

- The Nicom 3 software is better than the Nicom 2 software.

The things being compared must be of the same kind.

- A hard-side briefcase offers more protection than a briefcase fabric.

Be sure to point out the parallels or differences between the things being compared. Do not assume your reader will know what you mean.

- Washington is farther from Boston than it is from Philadelphia.

A double comparison in the same sentence requires that the first comparison be completed before the second one is stated.

- The discovery of electricity was one of the great ~~if not the greatest~~ , if not the greatest scientific discoveries in history.

Do not attempt to compare things that are not comparable.

C

- Agricultural experts advise that ~~storage space is reduced by 40 percent compared with~~ *requires 40 percent less storage space than* baled hay. *loose hay requires*

  [*Storage space* is not comparable to *baled hay*.]

comparison method of development

As a **method of development**, comparison points out similarities and differences between the elements of your subject. The comparison method of development can help **readers** understand a difficult or an unfamiliar subject by relating it to a simpler or more familiar one.

You must first determine the basis for the **comparison**. For example, if you were comparing bids from contractors for a remodeling project at your company, you most likely would compare such factors as price, previous experience, personnel qualifications, availability at a time convenient for you, and completion date. Once you have determined the basis or bases for comparison, you can determine the most effective way to structure your comparison: whole by whole or part by part.

In the *whole-by-whole method*, all the relevant characteristics of one item are examined before all the relevant characteristics of the next item. The description of typical woodworking glues in Figure C–3 is organized according to the whole-by-whole method. It describes each type of glue and all its characteristics before moving to the next one. This description would be useful for those readers who wish to learn about all types of wood glues.

If your **purpose** is to help readers consider the various characteristics of all the glues, the information might be arranged according to the *part-by-part method of comparison*, in which the relevant features of the items are compared one by one (as shown in Figure C–4). The part-by-part method could accommodate further comparison—such as temperature ranges, special warnings, and common use, in this case.

Comparisons can also be made effectively with the use of **tables**, as shown in Figure C–5. The advantage of a table is that it provides a quick reference, allowing readers to see and compare all the information at once. The disadvantage is that a table cannot convey as much related detailed information as a narrative description.

White glue is the most useful all-purpose adhesive for light construction, but it cannot be used on projects that will be exposed to moisture, high temperature, or great stress. Wood that is being joined with white glue must remain in a clamp until the glue dries, which takes about 30 minutes.

Aliphatic resin glue has a stronger and more moisture-resistant bond than white glue. It must be used at temperatures above 50°F. The wood should be clamped for about 30 minutes. . . .

Plastic resin glue is the strongest of the common wood adhesives. It is highly moisture resistant, though not completely waterproof. Sold in powdered form, this glue must be mixed with water and used at temperatures above 70°F. It is slow setting, and the joint should be clamped for four to six hours. . . .

Contact cement is a very strong adhesive that bonds so quickly it must be used with great care. It is ideal for mounting sheets of plastic laminate on wood. It is also useful for attaching strips of veneer to the edges of plywood. Because this adhesive bonds immediately when two pieces are pressed together, clamping is not necessary, but the parts to be joined must be carefully aligned before being placed together. Most brands are flammable, and the fumes can be harmful if inhaled. To meet current safety standards, this type of glue must be used in a well-ventilated area, away from flames or heat.

FIGURE C–3. Whole-by-Whole Method of Comparison

Woodworking adhesives are rated primarily according to their bonding strength, moisture resistance, and setting time.

Bonding strength is categorized as very strong, moderately strong, or adequate for use with little stress. Contact cement and plastic resin glue bond very strongly, while aliphatic resin glue bonds moderately strongly. White glue provides a bond least resistant to stress.

The *moisture resistance* of woodworking glues is rated as high, moderate, or low. Plastic resin glue and contact cement are highly moisture resistant, aliphatic resin glue is moderately moisture resistant, and white glue is least moisture resistant.

Setting time for the glues varies from an immediate bond to a four-to-six-hour bond. Contact cement bonds immediately and requires no clamping. Because the bond is immediate, surfaces being joined must be carefully aligned before being placed together. White glue and aliphatic resin glue set in 30 minutes; both require clamping to secure the bond. Plastic resin, the strongest wood glue, sets in four to six hours and also requires clamping.

FIGURE C–4. Part-by-Part Method of Comparison

	White Glue	Aliphatic Resin Glue	Plastic Resin Glue	Contact Cement
Bonding Strength	Low	Moderate	High	High
Moisture Resistance	Low	Moderate	High	High
Setting Time	Thirty minutes	Thirty minutes	Four to six hours	Bonds on contact
Common Uses	Light construction	General purpose	General purpose	Laminate and veneer to wood

FIGURE C–5. Comparison Using a Table to Illustrate Key Differences

complaint letters

A complaint **letter** (or **e-mail**) describes a problem that the writer requests the recipient to solve. The **tone** of a complaint letter or e-mail is important; the most effective ones do not sound complaining. If your message is shrill and belligerent, you may not be taken seriously. Assume that the recipient will be conscientious in correcting the problem. However, anticipate reader reactions or rebuttals. See **audience**.

- I reviewed my user manual's "safe operating guidelines" carefully before I installed the device.
  [This assures readers you followed instructions.]

Without such explanations, readers may be tempted to dismiss your complaint. Figure C–6 shows a complaint letter that details a billing problem. Although the circumstances and severity of the problem may vary, effective complaint letters generally follow this pattern:

1. Identify the problem or faulty item(s) and include relevant invoice numbers, part names, and dates. Include a copy of the receipt, bill, or contract, and keep the original for your records.
2. Explain logically, clearly, and specifically what went wrong, especially for a problem with a service. (Avoid guessing why you *think* some problem occurred.)
3. State what you expect the reader to do to solve the problem.

Begin by checking to see if the company's Web site provides instructions for submitting a complaint. Otherwise, for large organizations, you may address your complaint to Customer Service. In smaller organizations, you might write to a vice president in charge of sales or service, or directly to the owner. As a last resort, you may find that sending copies of a complaint letter to more than one person in the company will get faster results. See also **adjustment letters** and **refusal letters**.

Subject: ST3 Diagnostic Scanners

On July 11, I ordered nine ST3 Diagnostic Scanners (order # ST3-1179R). The scanners were ordered from your customer Web site.

On August 3, I received seven HL monitors from your parts warehouse in Newark, New Jersey. I immediately returned those monitors with a note indicating that a mistake had been made. However, not only have I failed to receive the ST3 scanners that I ordered, but I have also been billed repeatedly for the seven monitors.

I have enclosed a copy of my confirmation e-mail, the shipping form, and the most recent bill. If you cannot send me the scanners I ordered by September 15, please cancel my order.

Sincerely,

FIGURE C–6. Complaint Letter

complement / compliment

Complement means "anything that completes a whole" (see also **complements**). It is used as either a **noun** or a **verb**.

- A *complement* of four employees would bring our staff up to its normal level. [noun]
- The two programs *complement* one another perfectly. [verb]

Compliment means "praise." It too is used as either a noun or a verb.

- The manager's *compliment* boosted staff morale. [noun]
- The manager *complimented* the staff on its efficient job. [verb]

complements

A complement is a word, **phrase**, or **clause** used in the predicate of a sentence to complete the meaning of the sentence.

- Pilots fly *airplanes*. [word]
- To live is *to risk death*. [phrase]
- John knew *that he would be late*. [clause]

Four types of complements are generally recognized: direct **object**, indirect object, objective complement, and subjective complement. See also **sentence construction**.

A *direct object* is a **noun** or noun equivalent that receives the action of a transitive **verb**; it answers the question *What?* or *Whom?* after the verb.

- I designed *a Web site*. [noun phrase]
- I like *to work*. [verbal]
- I like *it*. [pronoun]
- I like *what I saw*. [noun clause]

An *indirect object* is a noun or noun equivalent that occurs with a direct object after certain kinds of transitive verbs such as *give*, *wish*, *cause*, and *tell*. It answers the question *To whom or what?* or *For whom or what?*

- We should buy the *office* a *scanner*.
  [*Scanner* is the direct object, and *office* is the indirect object.]

An *objective complement* completes the meaning of a sentence by revealing something about the object of its transitive verb. An objective complement may be either a noun or an **adjective**.

- They call him *a genius*. [noun phrase]
- We painted the building *white*. [adjective]

A *subjective complement*, which follows a linking verb rather than a transitive verb, describes the subject. A subjective complement may be either a noun or an adjective.

- His sister is *a consultant*. [noun phrase follows linking verb *is*]
- His brother is *ill*. [adjective follows linking verb *is*]

compose / constitute / comprise

Compose and *constitute* both mean "make up the whole." The parts *compose* or *constitute* the whole. ("The nine offices *compose* the division. Unethical activities *constitute* cause for dismissal.") *Comprise*

means "include," "contain," or "consist of." The whole *comprises* the parts. ("The division *comprises* nine offices.")

compound words

A compound word is made from two or more words that function as a single concept. A compound may be hyphenated, written as one word, or written as separate words.

▶ high-energy	nevertheless	post office
low-level	online	blood pressure

If you are not certain whether a compound word should use a **hyphen**, check a dictionary.

Be careful to distinguish between compound words (*greenhouse*) and words that simply appear together but do not constitute compound words (*green house*). For plurals of compound words, generally add *s* to the last letter (*bookcases* and *Web sites*). However, when the first word of the compound is more important to its meaning than the last, the first word takes the *s* (*editors in chief*). Possessives are formed by adding *'s* to the end of the compound word (the *editor in chief's* desk, the *pipeline's* diameter, the *post office's* hours). See also **possessive case**.

conciseness

Conciseness means that extraneous words, **phrases**, **clauses**, and sentences have been removed from writing without sacrificing **clarity** or appropriate detail. Conciseness is not a synonym for brevity; a long **report** may be concise, while its **abstract** may be brief and concise. Conciseness is always desirable, but brevity may or may not be desirable in a given passage, depending on the writer's **purpose**. Although concise sentences are not guaranteed to be effective, wordy sentences always sacrifice some of their readability and **coherence**.

Causes of Wordiness

Modifiers that repeat an idea implicit or present in the word being modified contribute to wordiness by being redundant. See also **reason is [because]**.

basic essentials	*completely* finished
final outcome	*present* status

Coordinated synonyms that merely repeat each other contribute to wordiness.

each and every	*basic and fundamental*
finally and for good	*first and foremost*

Excess qualification also contributes to wordiness.

perfectly clear	*completely* accurate

Expletives, relative **pronouns**, and relative **adjectives**, although they have legitimate purposes, often result in wordiness.

WORDY *There are* [expletive] many Web designers *who* [relative pronoun] are planning to attend the conference, *which* [relative pronoun] is scheduled for May 13–15.

CONCISE Many Web designers plan to attend the conference scheduled for May 13–15.

Circumlocution (a long, indirect way of expressing things) is a leading cause of wordiness. See also **gobbledygook.**

WORDY The payment to which a subcontractor is entitled should be made promptly so that in the event of a subsequent contractual dispute we, as general contractors, may not be held in default of our contract by virtue of nonpayment.

CONCISE Pay subcontractors promptly. Then, if a contractual dispute occurs, we cannot be held in default of our contract because of nonpayment.

When conciseness is overdone, writing can become choppy and ambiguous. (See also **telegraphic style**.) Too much conciseness can produce a style that is not only too brief but also too blunt, especially in **correspondence**.

WRITER'S CHECKLIST Achieving Conciseness

Wordiness is understandable when you are **writing a draft**, but it should not survive **revision**.

✔ Use **subordination** to achieve conciseness.

- The financial report was carefully documented, ~~and it covered five pages.~~ *five-page*

✔ Avoid **affectation** by using simple words and phrases.

WORDY It is the policy of the company to provide Internet access to enable employees to conduct the online communication necessary to discharge their responsibilities; such should not be utilized for personal communications or nonbusiness activities.

CONCISE Employee Internet access should be used only for appropriate company business.

✔ Eliminate redundancy.

WORDY Postinstallation testing, which is offered to all our customers at no further cost to them whatsoever, is available with each Line Scan System One purchased from this company.

CONCISE Free postinstallation testing is offered with each Line Scan System One.

✔ Change the passive **voice** to the **active voice** and the indicative **mood** to the imperative mood whenever possible.

WORDY Bar codes normally are used when an order is intended to be displayed on a monitor, and inventory numbers normally are used when an order is to be placed with the manufacturer.

CONCISE Use bar codes to display the order on a monitor, and use inventory numbers to place the order with the manufacturer.

✔ Eliminate or replace wordy introductory phrases or pretentious words and phrases (*in the case of*, *it may be said that*, *it appears that*, *needless to say*).

REPLACE	WITH
in order to, with a view to	to
due to the fact that, for the reason that, owing to the fact that, the reason for	because
by means of, by using, in connection with, through the use of	by, with
at this time, at this point in time, at present, at the present	now, currently

✔ Do not overuse **intensifiers**, such as *very*, *more*, *most*, *best*, *quite*, *great*, *really*, and *especially*. Instead provide specific and useful details.

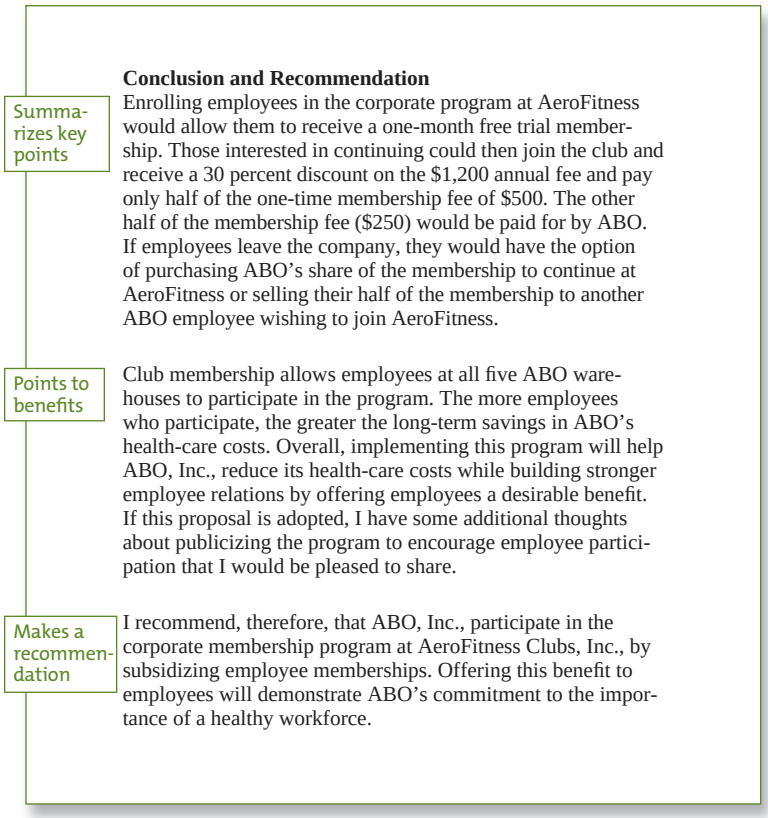
✔ Use the search-and-replace command to find and revise wordy expressions, including *to be* and unnecessary helping **verbs** such as *will*.

conclusions

C

The conclusion of a document ties the main ideas together and can clinch a final significant point. This final point may, for example, make a prediction or offer a judgment, summarize key findings, or recommend a course of action. Figure C–7 is a conclusion from a proposal to reduce health-care costs by increasing employee fitness through health-club subsidies. Notice that it makes a recommendation, summarizes key points, and points out several benefits of implementing the recommendation.

The way you conclude depends on your **purpose**, the needs of your **audience**, and the **context**. For example, a lengthy sales **proposal** might conclude persuasively with a summary of the proposal's salient points



Conclusion and Recommendation

Enrolling employees in the corporate program at AeroFitness would allow them to receive a one-month free trial membership. Those interested in continuing could then join the club and receive a 30 percent discount on the $1,200 annual fee and pay only half of the one-time membership fee of $500. The other half of the membership fee ($250) would be paid for by ABO. If employees leave the company, they would have the option of purchasing ABO's share of the membership to continue at AeroFitness or selling their half of the membership to another ABO employee wishing to join AeroFitness.

Club membership allows employees at all five ABO warehouses to participate in the program. The more employees who participate, the greater the long-term savings in ABO's health-care costs. Overall, implementing this program will help ABO, Inc., reduce its health-care costs while building stronger employee relations by offering employees a desirable benefit. If this proposal is adopted, I have some additional thoughts about publicizing the program to encourage employee participation that I would be pleased to share.

I recommend, therefore, that ABO, Inc., participate in the corporate membership program at AeroFitness Clubs, Inc., by subsidizing employee memberships. Offering this benefit to employees will demonstrate ABO's commitment to the importance of a healthy workforce.

FIGURE C–7. Conclusion

and the company's relevant strengths. The following examples are typical concluding strategies.

RECOMMENDATION

Our findings suggest that you need to expand your research activities to remain competitive in the global pharmaceutical market.

SUMMARY

As this report describes, we would attract more recent graduates with the following strategies:

1. Establish our presence on social-networking sites to reach more college students before they graduate.
2. Increase our advertising in local student newspapers and our attendance at college career fairs.
3. Expand our local co-op program and establish more internships.

JUDGMENT

Based on the scope and degree of the storm's damage, the current construction code for roofing on light industrial facilities is inadequate.

IMPLICATION

Although our estimate calls for a substantially higher budget than in the three previous years, we believe that it is reasonable given our planned expansion.

PREDICTION

Although I have exceeded my original estimate for equipment, I have reduced my labor costs; therefore, I will easily stay within the original bid.

The concluding statement may merely present ideas for consideration, may call for action, or may deliberately provoke thought.

IDEAS FOR CONSIDERATION

The new prices become effective the first of the year. Price adjustments are routine for the company, but some of your customers will not consider them acceptable. Please bear in mind the needs of both your customers and the company as you implement these price adjustments.

CALL FOR ACTION

Please send us a check for $250 now if you wish to keep your account active. If you have not responded to our previous letters

because of some special hardship, I will be glad to work out a solution with you.

THOUGHT-PROVOKING STATEMENT

Can we continue to accept the losses incurred by inefficiency? Or should we take the necessary steps to control it now?

Be especially careful not to introduce a new topic when you conclude. A conclusion should always relate to and reinforce the ideas presented earlier in your writing. Moreover, the conclusion must be consistent with what the **introduction** promised the report would examine (its purpose) and how it would do so (its method).

For guidance about the location of the conclusion section in a report, see **formal reports**. For letter and other short closings, see **correspondence** and entries on specific types of documents throughout this book.

conjunctions

A conjunction connects words, **phrases**, or **clauses** and can also indicate the relationship between the elements it connects.

A *coordinating conjunction* joins two sentence elements that have identical functions. The coordinating conjunctions are *and*, *but*, *or*, *for*, *nor*, *yet*, and *so*.

- Nature *and* technology affect petroleum prices. [joins two **nouns**]
- To hear *and* to listen are two different things. [joins two phrases]
- I would like to include the survey, *but* that would make the report too long. [joins two clauses]

Coordinating conjunctions in the titles of books, articles, plays, and movies should not be capitalized unless they are the first or last word in the title.

- Our library contains *Consulting and Financial Independence* as well as *So You Want to Be a Consultant?*

Occasionally, a conjunction may begin a sentence; in fact, conjunctions can be strong transitional words and at times can provide **emphasis**. See also **transition**.

- I realize that the project is more difficult than expected and that you have encountered staffing problems. *But* we must meet our deadline.

Correlative conjunctions are used in pairs. The correlative conjunctions are *either . . . or*, *neither . . . nor*, *not only . . . but also*, *both . . . and*, and *whether . . . or*.

- The inspector will arrive *either* on Wednesday *or* on Thursday.

A *subordinating conjunction* connects sentence elements of different relative importance, normally independent and dependent clauses. Frequently used subordinating conjunctions are *so*, *although*, *after*, *because*, *if*, *where*, *than*, *since*, *as*, *unless*, *before*, *that*, *though*, and *when*.

- I left the lab *after* I had finished the tests.

A *conjunctive adverb* functions as a conjunction because it joins two independent clauses. The most common conjunctive **adverbs** are *however*, *moreover*, *therefore*, *further*, *then*, *consequently*, *besides*, *accordingly*, *also*, and *thus*.

- The engine performed well in the laboratory; *however*, it failed under road conditions.

connotation / denotation

The *denotations* of a word are its literal meanings, as defined in a dictionary. The *connotations* of a word are its meanings and associations beyond its literal definitions. For example, the denotations of *Hollywood* are "a district of Los Angeles" and "the U.S. movie industry as a whole"; its connotations for many are "glamour, opulence, and superficiality."

Often words have particular connotations for **audiences** within professional groups and organizations. Choose words with both the most accurate denotations and the most appropriate connotations for the **context**. See also **defining terms** and **word choice**.

consensus

Because *consensus* means "harmony of opinion" among most of those in a group, the phrases *consensus of opinion* and *general consensus* defeat **conciseness**. The word *consensus* can be used to refer only to a group, never to one or two people.

- The ~~general~~ consensus ~~of opinion~~ among researchers is that the drug is ineffective.

content management

C

Content management refers to the management of stored text, images, and other information in ways that allow multiple writers to use the same information for different purposes. For example, one writer may use a description or an image of a product in a promotional **brochure** and another may use it for a technical **manual**. The writer would access the description, copy it into the draft of the new document, and revise it to fit its new content. Thus the description need be written only once and then may be reused multiple times, greatly increasing efficiency. See also **repurposing**.

Writing for Content Management

When you are writing in a content-management environment, consider using a **tone** and **style** that would be appropriate for multiple applications to whatever extent possible. Because **audience**, **purpose**, and **context** vary from one application to another, the same material will rarely fit multiple documents exactly, but it is much easier and more efficient to use something that need only be revised to fit its new content.

Content-Management Systems

The technologies developed to achieve the goals of content management, *content-management systems*, are integrated software tools used to control the processes that store and retrieve information. Types of content-management systems include the following:

- *Web content-management system*: Provides tools for creating, updating, and managing Web-site content. Some systems include functions that allow Web managers to monitor workflow and maintain the entire Web site.
- *Document-management system*: Stores and tracks electronic documents or images of paper documents, allowing organizations to replace their hard-copy files with sophisticated indexing, browsing, and searching capabilities. Document-management systems often include workflow tools that help writers track and manage changes to documents during review cycles, such as in collaborative writing projects.
- *Component content-management system*: Manages content for any media at the paragraph, sentence, and even word levels.* For

*Such content-management systems are sometimes called "granularized" systems because they manage such small pieces of content (or "granules").

example, a safety warning might state, "Don't stick a fork in the toaster." With a component content-management system, a writer can edit this warning to say "Don't stick any silverware into the toaster" and the system could automatically update all instances of this warning in an organization's manuals, help files, brochures, Web pages, and other documents.

- *Enterprise content-management system*: Blends the functions of Web, document, and often component content-management systems to create an all-in-one system for an entire organization. Such systems aim to generate and organize content for various publications, media, and other important applications, such as e-mail, financial record keeping, and human resource activities.

WEB LINK	Content Management
For links to Web sites and books that provide information on content management and content-management systems, *see* ***bedfordstmartins.com/alred*** and select *Links for Handbook Entries*.	

context

Context is the environment or circumstances in which writers produce documents and within which readers interpret the meanings of those documents. Everything is written in a context, as illustrated in many entries and examples throughout this book. This entry considers the significance of context for workplace writing and suggests how you can be aware of it as you write. See also **audience**.

The context for any document, such as a **proposal** or **report**, is determined by interrelated events or circumstances both inside and outside an organization.* For example, when you write a proposal to fund a project within your company, the economic condition of that company is part of the context that will determine how your proposal is received. If the company has recently laid off a dozen employees, its management may not be inclined to approve a proposal to expand its operations—regardless of how well the proposal is written.

*For a detailed illustration of specific documents that have been affected by particular contexts, see Linda Driskill, "Understanding the Writing Context in Organizations," in *Central Works in Technical Communication*, ed. Johndan Johnson-Eilola and Stuart A. Selber (New York: Oxford University Press, 2004), 55–69.

When you correspond with someone, the events that prompted you to write shape the context of the message and will affect what you say and how you say it. If you write to a customer in response to a complaint, for example, the **tone** and approach of your message will be determined by the context—what you find when you investigate the issue. Is your company fully or partly at fault? Has the customer incorrectly used a product? contributed to a problem? (See also **adjustment letters**.) If you write a **manual** for auto-service technicians, other questions will reveal the context. What are the lighting and other physical conditions in garages? Will these physical conditions affect the **layout and design** of the manual? What potentially dangerous situations might the technicians encounter?

Assessing Context

Each time you write, the context needs to be clearly in your mind so that your document will achieve its **purpose**. The following questions are starting points to help you become aware of the context, how it will influence your approach and your readers' interpretation of what you have written, and how it will affect the decisions you need to make during the writing process. See also "Five Steps to Successful Writing" on page xv.

- What is your professional relationship with your readers, and how might that affect the tone, **style**, and **scope** of your writing? What is "the story" behind the immediate reason you are writing; that is, what series of events or perhaps previous documents led to your need to write?
- What is the preferred medium of your readers? See also **selecting the medium**.
- What specific factors (such as competition, finance, and regulation) are recognized within your organization or department as important?
- What is the corporate culture in which your readers work, and what are the key values that you might find in its mission statement?
- What are the professional relationships among the specific readers who will receive the document?
- What current events within or outside an organization or a department may influence how readers interpret your writing?
- What national cultural differences might affect your readers' expectations or interpretations of the document? See also **global communication**.

As these questions suggest, context is specific each time you write and often involves, for example, the history of a specific organization or your past dealings with individual readers.

Signaling Context

Because context is so important, remind your reader in some way of the context for your writing, as in the following opening for a cover message to a proposal.

- During our meeting last week on improving quality, you mentioned that we have previously required usability testing only for documents going to high-profile clients because of the costs involved. The idea occurred to me that we might try less-extensive usability testing for many of our other clients. Because you asked for suggestions, I have proposed in the attached document a method of limited usability testing for a broad range of clients in order to improve overall quality while keeping costs at a minimum.

Of course, as described in **introductions**, providing context for a reader may require only a brief background statement or short reminders.

- Several weeks ago, a financial adviser noticed a recurring problem in the software developed by Datacom Systems. Specifically, error messages repeatedly appeared when, in fact, no specific trouble . . .
- Jane, as I promised in my e-mail yesterday, I've attached the personnel budget estimates for the next fiscal year.

As the last example suggests, provide context for attachments that you send with **e-mail**.

continual / continuous

Continual implies "happening over and over" or "frequently repeated." ("Writing well requires *continual* practice.") *Continuous* implies "occurring without interruption" or "unbroken." ("The *continuous* roar of the machinery was deafening.")

contractions

A contraction is a shortened spelling of a word or phrase with an **apostrophe** substituting for the missing letter or letters (*cannot / can't*; *have*

not / *haven't*; *will not* / *won't*; *it is* / *it's*). Contractions are often used in speech and informal writing; they are generally not appropriate in **reports**, **proposals**, and formal **correspondence**. See also **technical writing style**.

copyright

Copyright establishes legal protection for literary, dramatic, musical, artistic, and other intellectual works in printed or electronic form; it gives the copyright owner exclusive rights to reproduce, distribute, perform, or display a work. Copyright protects all original works from the moment of their creation, regardless of whether they are published or contain a notice of copyright (©).

❖ ETHICS NOTE If you plan to reproduce copyrighted material in your own publication or on your Web site, you must obtain permission from the copyright holder. To do otherwise is a violation of U.S. law. ❖

Permissions

To seek permission to reproduce copyrighted material, you must write to the copyright holder. In some cases, it is the author; in other cases, it is the editor or publisher of the work. For Web sites, read the site's "terms-of-use" information (if available) and e-mail your request to the appropriate party. State specifically which portion of the work you wish to reproduce and how you plan to use it. The copyright holder has the right to charge a fee and specify conditions and limits of use.

Exceptions

Some print and Web material—including text, **visuals**, and other digital forms—may be reproduced without permission, as described in the following list. The rules governing copyright can be complex, so it is prudent to check carefully the copyright status of anything you plan to reproduce.

- *Educational material.* A small amount of material from a copyrighted source may be used for educational purposes (such as classroom handouts) without permission or payment as long as the use satisfies the "fair-use" criteria, as described at the U.S. Copyright Office Web site, *www.copyright.gov*.
- *Company boilerplate.* Employees often borrow material freely from in-house manuals, reports, and other company documents to save time and ensure consistency. Using such "boilerplate" or "repurposed" material is not a copyright violation because the

company is considered the author of works prepared by its employees on the job. See also **content management** and **repurposing**.

- *Public domain material.* Works created by or for the U.S. government and not classified or otherwise protected are in the public domain—that is, they are not copyrighted. The same is true for older written works when their copyright has lapsed or never existed. Be aware that some works in the public domain may include "value-added" features, such as introductions, visuals, and indexes, that are copyrighted separately from the original work.
- *Copyleft Web material.* Some public access Web sites, such as Wikipedia, follow the "copyleft" principle and grant permission to freely copy, distribute, or modify material.*

❖ ETHICS NOTE Even when you use material that may be reproduced or published without permission, you must nonetheless give appropriate credit to the source from which the material is taken, as described in **documenting sources** and **plagiarism**. ❖

WEB LINK	Alternative Forms of Copyright

The emergence of the Internet has greatly changed the face of copyright, creating an illusion of universal access to online material when permission is often required to alter or use it in any way. Alternative forms of copyright — like those offered by Creative Commons — allow users to freely incorporate specific content into their documents and to license their own original content. See ***bedfordstmartins.com/alred*** and select *Links for Handbook Entries*.

correspondence

DIRECTORY

Audience and Writing Style 106
Goodwill and the "You" Viewpoint 107
Writer's Checklist: Using Tone to Build Goodwill 108
Good-News and Bad-News Patterns 109
Openings and Closings 112
Clarity and Emphasis 112
Writer's Checklist: Correspondence and Accuracy 113

* "Copyleft" is a play on the word *copyright* and is the effort to free materials from many of the restrictions of copyright. See *http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Copyleft*.

Correspondence in the workplace—whether through **e-mail**, **letters**, **memos** or another medium—requires many of the steps that are described in "Five Steps to Successful Writing" (page xv). As you prepare even a simple e-mail, for example, you might study previous messages (**research**) and then list or arrange the points you wish to cover (**organization**) in an order that is logical for your readers. See also **selecting the medium**.

Corresponding with others in the workplace also requires that you focus on both establishing or maintaining a positive working relationship with your **readers** and conveying a professional image of yourself and your organization. See also **audience**.

Audience and Writing Style

Effective correspondence uses an appropriate conversational **style**. To achieve that style, imagine your reader sitting across from you and write to the reader as if you were talking face to face. Take into account your reader's needs and feelings. Ask yourself, "How might I feel if I received this letter or e-mail?" and then tailor your message accordingly. Remember, an impersonal and unfriendly message to a customer or client can tarnish the image of you and your business, but a thoughtful and sincere one can enhance it.

Whether you use a formal or an informal writing style depends entirely on your reader and your **purpose**. You might use an informal (or a casual) style, for example, with a colleague you know well and a formal (or restrained) style with a client you do not know.

CASUAL	It worked! The new process is better than we had dreamed.
RESTRAINED	You will be pleased to know that the new process is more effective than we expected.

You will probably find yourself using the restrained style more frequently than the casual style. Remember that an overdone attempt to sound casual or friendly can sound insincere. However, do not adopt so formal a style that your writing reads like a legal contract. **Affectation** not only will irritate and baffle readers but also can waste time and produce costly errors.

AFFECTED	Per yesterday's e-mail, we no longer possess an original copy of the brochure requested. Please be advised that a PDF copy is attached herewith to this e-mail.
IMPROVED	We are out of original copies of the brochure we discussed yesterday, so I am attaching a PDF copy to this e-mail.

The improved version is not only clearer and less stuffy but also more concise. See also **conciseness**.

Goodwill and the "You" Viewpoint

Write concisely, but do not be so blunt that you risk losing the reader's goodwill. Responding to a vague written request with "Your request was unclear" or "I don't understand" could offend your reader. Instead, establish goodwill to encourage your reader to provide the information you need.

- I will be glad to help, but I need additional information to locate the report you requested. Specifically, can you give me the report's title, release date, or number?

Although this version is a bit longer, it is more tactful and will elicit a helpful response. See also **telegraphic style**.

You can also build goodwill by emphasizing the reader's needs or benefits. Suppose you received a refund request from a customer who forgot to include the receipt with the request. In a response to that customer, you might write the following:

WEAK We must receive the sales receipt before we can process a refund.
[The writer's needs are emphasized: "*We* must."]

If you consider how to keep the customer's goodwill, you could word the request this way:

IMPROVED Please send the sales receipt so that we can process your refund.
[Although polite, the sentence focuses on the writer's needs: "so that *we* can process."]

You can put the reader's needs and interests foremost by writing from the reader's perspective. Often, doing so means using the words *you* and *your* rather than *we*, *our*, *I*, and *mine*—a technique called the **"you" viewpoint**. Consider the following revision:

EFFECTIVE So that you can receive your refund promptly, please mail or fax the sales receipt.
[The reader's needs are emphasized with *you* and *your*.]

This revision stresses the reader's benefit and interest. By emphasizing the reader's needs, the writer will be more likely to accomplish the purpose: to get the reader to act. See also **positive writing**.

If overdone, however, goodwill and the "you" viewpoint can produce writing that is fawning and insincere. Messages that are full of excessive praise and inflated language may be ignored—or even resented—by the reader.

EXCESSIVE PRAISE	You are just the kind of astute client that deserves the finest service that we can offer—and you deserve our best deal. Understanding how carefully you make decisions, I know you'll think about the advantages of using our consulting service.
REASONABLE	From our earlier correspondence, I understand your need for reliable service. We strive to give all our priority clients our full attention, and after you have reviewed our proposal I am confident you will appreciate our "five-star" consulting option.

WRITER'S CHECKLIST Using Tone to Build Goodwill

Use the following guidelines to achieve a tone that builds goodwill with your readers.

✔ Be respectful, not demanding.

DEMANDING	Submit your answer in one week.
RESPECTFUL	I would appreciate your answer within one week.

✔ Be modest, not arrogant.

ARROGANT	My attached report is thorough, and I'm sure that you won't be able to continue without it.
MODEST	The attached report contains details of the refinancing options that I hope you will find useful.

✔ Be polite, not sarcastic.

SARCASTIC	I just now received the shipment we ordered six months ago. I'm sending it back—we can't use it now. Thanks a lot!
POLITE	I am returning the shipment we ordered on March 12. Unfortunately, it arrived too late for us to be able to use it.

WRITER'S CHECKLIST **Using Tone to Build Goodwill** (*continued*)

✔ Be positive and tactful, not negative and condescending.

NEGATIVE	Your complaint about our prices is way off target. Our prices are definitely not any higher than those of our competitors.
TACTFUL	Thank you for your suggestion concerning our prices. We believe, however, that our prices are comparable to or lower than those of our competitors.

Good-News and Bad-News Patterns

Although the relative directness of correspondence may vary, it is generally more effective to present good news directly and bad news indirectly, especially if the stakes are high.* This principle is based on the fact that readers form their impressions and attitudes very early and that you as the writer may want to subordinate the bad news to reasons that make the bad news understandable. Further, if you are writing **international correspondence**, consider that far more cultures are generally indirect in business messages than are direct.

Consider the thoughtlessness of the direct rejection in Figure C–8. Although the message is concise and uses the pronouns *you* and *your*, the writer does not consider how the recipient is likely to feel as she reads the rejection. Its pattern is (1) the bad news, (2) an explanation, and (3) the closing.

A better general pattern for bad news is (1) an opening that provides **context** (often called a "buffer"), (2) an explanation, (3) the bad news, and (4) a goodwill closing. (See also **refusal letters**.) The opening introduces the subject and establishes a professional tone. The body provides an explanation by reviewing facts that make the bad news understandable. Although bad news is never pleasant, information that either puts the bad news in perspective or makes it seem reasonable promotes not only understanding but also goodwill between the writer and the reader. The closing should reinforce a positive relationship through goodwill or helpful information. Consider, for example, the courteous rejection shown in Figure C–9. It carries the same disappointing news as does the letter in Figure C–8, but the writer is careful to thank the reader for her

* Gerald J. Alred, "'We Regret to Inform You': Toward a New Theory of Negative Messages," in *Studies in Technical Communication*, ed. Brenda R. Sims (Denton: University of North Texas and NCTE, 1993), 17–36.

Dear Ms. Mauer:

Your application for the position of Cardiovascular Technician at Southtown Cardiac Associates has been rejected. We have found someone more qualified than you.

Sincerely,

FIGURE C–8. A Poor Bad-News Message

time and effort, explain why she was not accepted for the job, and offer her encouragement.

This pattern can also be used in relatively short e-mail messages and memos. Consider the unintended secondary message the following notice conveys:

WEAK It has been decided that the office will be open the day after Thanksgiving.

"It has been decided" not only sounds impersonal but also communicates an authoritarian, management-versus-employee tone. The passive voice also suggests that the decision-maker does not want to say "I have

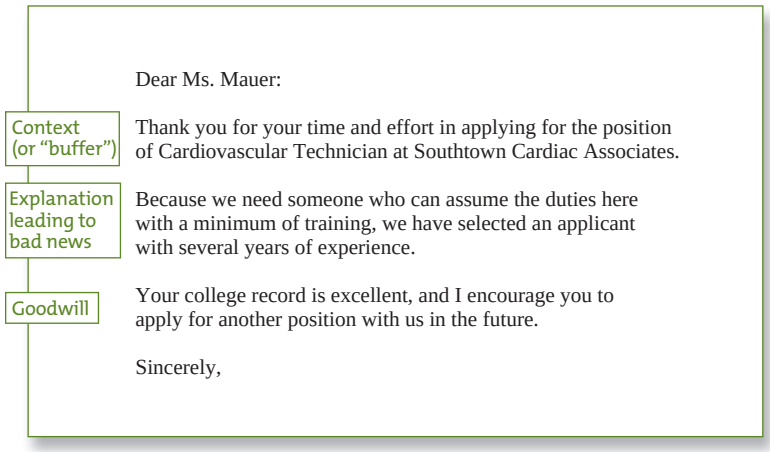

Dear Ms. Mauer:
Context (or "buffer")
Thank you for your time and effort in applying for the position of Cardiovascular Technician at Southtown Cardiac Associates.
Explanation leading to bad news
Because we need someone who can assume the duties here with a minimum of training, we have selected an applicant with several years of experience.
Goodwill
Your college record is excellent, and I encourage you to apply for another position with us in the future.
Sincerely,

FIGURE C–9. A Courteous Bad-News Message

decided" and thus accept responsibility. One solution is to remove the first part of the sentence.

IMPROVED The office will be open the day after Thanksgiving.

The best solution, however, would be to suggest both that there is a good reason for the decision and that employees are privy to (if not a part of) the decision-making process.

EFFECTIVE Because we must meet the December 15 deadline for submitting the Bradley Foundation proposal, the office will be open the day after Thanksgiving.

By describing the context of the bad news first (the need to meet the deadline), the writer focuses on the reasoning behind the decision to work. Employees may not necessarily like the message, but they will at least understand that the decision is not arbitrary and is tied to an important deadline.

Presenting good news is, of course, easier. Present good news in your opening. By doing so, you increase the likelihood that the reader will pay careful attention to details, and you achieve goodwill from the start. The pattern for good-news messages should be (1) a good-news opening, (2) an explanation of facts, and (3) a goodwill closing. Figure C–10 is an example of an effective good-news message.

Dear Ms. Mauer:

Good news

We are pleased to offer you the position of Cardiovascular Technician at Southtown Cardiac Associates at the salary of $54,300. Your qualifications fit our needs precisely, and we hope you will accept our offer.

Explanation

If the terms we discussed in the interview are acceptable to you, please come to the main office at 9:30 a.m. on November 16. At that time, we will ask you to complete our benefits form, in addition to . . .

Goodwill

Our entire office looks forward to working with you. Everyone was favorably impressed with you during your interview.

Sincerely,

FIGURE C–10. A Good-News Message

Openings and Closings

Although methods of development vary, the opening of any correspondence should identify the subject and often the main point of the message.

- Attached is the final installation report, which I hope you can review by Monday, December 12. You will notice that the report includes . . .

When your reader is not familiar with the subject or with the background of a problem, you may provide an introductory paragraph before stating the main point of the message. Doing so is especially important in correspondence that will serve as a record of crucial information. Generally, longer or complex subjects benefit most from more thorough **introductions**. However, even when you are writing a short message about a familiar subject, remind readers of the context. In the following example, words that provide context are shown in *italics*.

- *As Maria Lopez recommended*, I reviewed the office reorganization plan. I like most of the features; however, . . .

Do not state the main point first when (1) readers are likely to be highly skeptical or (2) key readers, such as managers or clients, may disagree with your position. In those cases, a more persuasive tactic is to state the problem or issue first, then present the specific points supporting your final recommendation, as discussed in the earlier section on bad-news messages. See also **persuasion**.

Your closing can accomplish many important tasks, such as building positive relationships with readers, encouraging colleagues and employees, and letting recipients know what you will do or what you expect of them.

- I will discuss the problem with the HVAC consultant and let you know by Wednesday what we are able to change.

Routine statements are sometimes unavoidable. ("If you have further questions, please let me know.") However, try to make your closing work for you by providing specific prompts to which the reader can respond. See also **conclusions**.

- Thanks again for the report, and let me know if you want me to send you a copy of the test results.

Clarity and Emphasis

A clear message is one that is adequately developed and emphasizes your main points. The following example illustrates how adequate development is crucial to the **clarity** of your message.

VAGUE Be more careful on the loading dock.

DEVELOPED To prevent accidents on the loading dock, follow these procedures:

1. Check . . . [followed by specific details]
2. Load only . . .
3. Replace . . .

Although the first version is concise, it is not as clear and specific as the "developed" revision. Do not assume your readers will know what you mean: vague messages are easily misinterpreted.

Lists. Vertically stacked words, **phrases**, and other items with numbers or bullets can effectively highlight such information as steps in sequence, materials or parts needed, key or concluding points, and recommendations. As described in the entry **lists**, make sure you provide context. Be careful not to overuse lists—a message that consists almost entirely of lists is difficult to understand because it forces readers to connect separate and disjointed items. Further, lists lose their effectiveness when they are overused.

Headings. **Headings** are particularly useful because they call attention to main topics, divide material into manageable segments, and signal a shift in topic. Readers can scan the headings and read only the section or sections appropriate to their needs.

Subject Lines. Subject lines for e-mails, memos, and some letters announce the topic and focus of the correspondence. Because they also aid filing and later retrieval, they must be specific and accurate.

VAGUE Subject: Tuition Reimbursement

VAGUE Subject: Time-Management Seminar

SPECIFIC Subject: Tuition Reimbursement for Time-Management Seminar

Capitalize all major words in a subject line except articles, prepositions, and conjunctions with fewer than five letters (unless they are the first or last words). Remember that the subject line should not substitute for an opening that provides context for the message. See also **titles**.

WRITER'S CHECKLIST **Correspondence and Accuracy**

✔ Begin by establishing your purpose, analyzing your reader's needs, determining your **scope**, and considering the context.

(*continued*)

WRITER'S CHECKLIST **Correspondence and Accuracy** (*continued*)

- ✔ Prepare an outline, even if it is only a list of points to be covered in the order you want to cover them. (See **outlining**.)
- ✔ Write the first draft. (See **writing a draft**.)
- ✔ Allow for a cooling-off period prior to **revision** or seek a colleague's advice, especially for correspondence that addresses a problem.
- ✔ Revise the draft, checking for key problems in clarity and **coherence**.
- ✔ Use the appropriate or standard format, for example as in **letters** and **memos**.
- ✔ Check for accuracy: Make sure that all facts, figures, and dates are correct.
- ✔ Use effective **proofreading** techniques to check your **punctuation**, **grammar**, **spelling**, and appropriate **usage**.
- ✔ Consider who should receive a copy of the message and in what order the names or e-mail addresses should be listed (alphabetize if rank does not apply).
- ✔ Remember that when you sign a letter or send a message, you are accepting responsibility for it.

cover letters (or transmittals)

A cover **letter**, **memo**, or **e-mail** accompanies a document (such as a **proposal**), an electronic file, or other material. It identifies an item that is being sent, the person to whom it is being sent, the reason that it is being sent, and any content that should be highlighted for **readers**. (See **purpose**.) A cover letter provides a permanent record for both the writer and the reader. For cover letters to **résumés**, see **application cover letters**.

The example in Figure C–11 is concise, but it also includes details such as how the information for the **report** was gathered.

credible / creditable

Something is *credible* if it is believable. ("The statistics in this report are *credible*.") Something is *creditable* if it is worthy of praise or credit. ("The lead engineer did a *creditable* job.")

Dear Mr. Hammersmith:

Attached is the report estimating our energy needs for the year as requested by John Brenan, Vice President, on September 5.

The report is a result of several meetings with the manager of plant operations and her staff and an extensive survey of all our employees. The survey was delayed by the transfer of key staff in Building A. We believe, however, that the report will provide the information you need in order to furnish us with a cost estimate for the installation of your Mark II Energy Saving System.

We would like to thank Diana Biel of ESI for her assistance in preparing the survey. If you need any more information, please let me know.

Sincerely,

FIGURE C–11. Cover Message

criteria / criterion

Criterion is a singular **noun** meaning "an established standard for judging or testing." *Criteria* and *criterions* are both acceptable plural forms of *criterion*, but *criteria* is generally preferred.

critique

A *critique* is a written or an oral evaluation of something. Avoid using *critique* as a **verb** meaning "criticize."

- Please prepare a critique of his job description.

D

dangling modifiers

Phrases that do not clearly and logically refer to the correct **noun** or **pronoun** are called *dangling modifiers*. Dangling modifiers usually appear at the beginning of a sentence as an introductory **phrase**.

DANGLING *While eating lunch*, the computer malfunctioned.
[*Who* was eating lunch?]

CORRECT While *I* was eating lunch, the computer malfunctioned.

Dangling modifiers can appear at the end of the sentence as well.

DANGLING The program gains efficiency *by eliminating the superfluous instructions*.
[*Who* eliminates the superfluous instructions?]

CORRECT The program gains efficiency *when you* eliminate the superfluous instructions.

To correct a dangling modifier, add the appropriate subject to either the dangling modifier or the main **clause**.

DANGLING After finishing the research, the proposal was easy to write.
[The appropriate subject is *I*, but it is not stated in either the dangling phrase or the main clause.]

CORRECT After *I* finished the research, the proposal was easy to write.
[The pronoun *I* is now the subject of an introductory clause.]

CORRECT After finishing the research, *I* found the proposal easy to write.
[The pronoun *I* is now the subject of the main clause.]

For a discussion of misplaced modifiers, see **modifiers**.

dashes

The dash (—) can perform all the punctuation duties of linking, separating, and enclosing. The dash, sometimes indicated by two consecutive **hyphens**, can also indicate the omission of letters. ("Mr. A—admitted his error.")

Use the dash cautiously to indicate more **emphasis**, informality, or abruptness than the other punctuation marks would show. A dash can emphasize a sharp turn in thought.

- The project will end May 13—unless we receive additional funding.

A dash can indicate an emphatic pause.

- The project will begin—after we are under contract.

Sometimes, to emphasize contrast, a dash is used with *but*.

- We completed the survey quickly—*but* the results were not accurate.

A dash can be used before a final summarizing statement or before repetition that has the effect of an afterthought.

- It was hot near the heat-treating ovens—steaming hot.

Such a statement may also complete the meaning of the **clause** preceding the dash.

- We try to write as we speak—or so we believe.

Dashes set off parenthetical elements more sharply and emphatically than **commas**. Unlike dashes, **parentheses** tend to deemphasize what they enclose. Compare the following sentences:

- Only one person—the president—can authorize such activity.
- Only one person, the president, can authorize such activity.
- Only one person (the president) can authorize such activity.

Dashes can be used to set off parenthetical elements that contain commas.

- Three of the applicants—John Evans, Rosalita Fontiana, and Kyong-Shik Choi—seem well qualified for the job.

The first word after a dash is capitalized only if it is a proper **noun**.

data

In formal and scholarly writing, *data* is generally used as a plural, with *datum* as the singular form. In much informal writing, however, *data* is considered a collective singular **noun**. Base your **usage** on whether your readers should consider the data as a single collection or as a group of individual facts. Whatever you decide, be sure that your **pronouns** and **verbs** agree in number, as in the following.

- These *data are* persuasive. *They indicate* a need for additional research questions. [formal]
- The attached *data is* confidential. *It is* the result of a survey of employee records. [less formal]

See also **agreement** and **English, varieties of**.

dates

In the United States, full dates are generally written in the month-day-year format, with a comma preceding and following the year.

- November 30, 2025, is the payoff date.

Do not use **commas** in the day-month-year format, which is used in many parts of the world and by the U.S. military.

- Note that 30 November 2025 is the payoff date.

No commas are used when showing only the month-year or month-day in a date.

- The target date of May 2015 is optimistic, so I would like to meet on March 4 to discuss our options.

When writing days of the month without the year, use the cardinal number ("March 4") rather than the ordinal number ("March 4th"). Of course, in speech or **presentations**, use the ordinal number ("March fourth").

Avoid the strictly numerical form for dates (11/6/15) because the date is not always immediately clear, especially in **international correspondence**. In many countries, 11/6/15 means June 11, 2015, rather than November 6, 2015. Writing out the name of the month makes the entire date immediately clear to all readers.

Centuries often cause confusion with **numbers** because their spelled-out forms, which are not capitalized, do not correspond with their numeral designations. The twentieth century, for example, is the 1900s: 1900–1999.

When the century is written as a **noun**, do not use a **hyphen**.

- During the twentieth century, technology transformed business practices.

When the centuries are written as **adjectives**, however, use hyphens.

- Twenty-first-century technology relies on dependable power sources.

defective / deficient

If something is *defective*, it is faulty. ("The wiring was *defective*.") If something is *deficient*, it is lacking or is incomplete in an essential component. ("The patient's diet was *deficient* in calcium.")

defining terms

Defining key terms and concepts is often essential for **clarity**. Terms can be defined either formally or informally, depending on your **purpose**, your **audience**, and the **context**.

A *formal definition* is a form of classification. You define a term by placing it in a category and then identifying the features that distinguish it from other members of the same category.

TERM	CATEGORY	DISTINGUISHING FEATURES
An *annual* is	a plant	that completes its life cycle, from seed to natural death, in one growing season.

An *informal definition* explains a term by giving a more familiar word or phrase as a **synonym**.

- Plants have a *symbiotic*, or *mutually beneficial*, relationship with certain kinds of bacteria.

State definitions positively; focus on what the term *is* rather than on what it is not.

NEGATIVE	In a legal transaction, *real property* is not personal property.
POSITIVE	*Real property* is legal terminology for the right or interest a person has in land and the permanent structures on that land.

For a discussion of when negative definitions are appropriate, see **definition method of development**.

Avoid circular definitions, which merely restate the term to be defined and therefore fail to clarify it.

CIRCULAR	*Spontaneous combustion* is fire that begins spontaneously.
REVISED	*Spontaneous combustion* is the self-ignition of a flammable material through a chemical reaction.

In addition, avoid "is when" and "is where" definitions. Such definitions fail to include the category and are too indirect.

a medical procedure in which

- A *biopsy* is ~~when~~ a tissue sample is removed for testing.

In technical writing, as illustrated in this example, definitions often contain the purpose ("testing") of what is defined (*biopsy*).

definite / definitive

Definite and *definitive* both apply to what is precisely defined, but *definitive* more often refers to what is complete and authoritative. ("Once we receive a *definite* proposal, our attorney can provide a *definitive* legal opinion.")

definition method of development

Definition is often essential to **clarity** and accuracy. Although **defining terms** may be sufficient, sometimes definitions need to be expanded through (1) extended definition, (2) definition by analogy, (3) definition by cause, (4) definition by components, (5) definition by exploration of origin, and (6) negative definition. See also **methods of development**.

Extended Definition

When you need more than a simple definition to explain an idea, use an extended definition, which explores a number of qualities of the item being defined. How an extended definition is developed depends on your **audience** and on the complexity of the subject. Readers familiar with a topic might be able to handle a long, fairly complex definition, whereas readers less familiar with a topic might require simpler language and more basic information.

The easiest way to give an extended definition is with specific examples. Examples give readers easy-to-picture details that help them see and thus understand the term being defined.

- Form, which is the shape of landscape features, can best be represented both by small-scale features, such as *trees* and *shrubs*, and by large-scale elements, such as *mountains* and *mountain ranges*.

Definition by Analogy

Another useful way to define a difficult concept, especially when you are writing for nonspecialists, is to use an analogy. An analogy can help the reader understand an unfamiliar term by showing its similarities with a more familiar term. In the following description of radio waves in terms of their length (long) and frequency (low), notice how the writer develops an analogy to show why a low frequency is advantageous.

- The low frequency makes it relatively easy to produce a sound wave having virtually all its power concentrated at one frequency. Think, for example, of a group of people lost in a forest. If they hear sounds of a search party in the distance, they all will begin to shout for help in different directions. Not a very efficient process, is it? But suppose all the energy that went into the production of this noise could be concentrated into a single shout or whistle. Clearly the chances that the group will be found would be much greater.

Definition by Cause

Some terms are best defined by an explanation of their causes. In the following example from a professional journal, a nurse describes an apparatus used to monitor blood pressure in severely ill patients. Called an *indwelling catheter*, the device displays blood-pressure readings on an oscilloscope and on a numbered scale. Users of the device, the writer explains, must understand what a *dampened wave form* is.

- The dampened wave form, the smoothing out or flattening of the pressure wave form on the oscilloscope, is usually caused by an obstruction that prevents blood pressure from being freely transmitted to the monitor. The obstruction may be a small clot or bit of fibrin at the catheter tip. More likely, the catheter tip has become positioned against the artery wall and is preventing the blood from flowing freely.

Definition by Components

Sometimes a formal definition of a concept can be made simpler by breaking the concept into its component parts. In the following example, the formal definition of *fire* is given in the first paragraph, and the component parts are given in the second.

FORMAL DEFINITION	Fire is the visible heat energy released from the rapid oxidation of a fuel. A substance is "on fire" when the release of heat energy from the oxidation process reaches visible light levels.
COMPONENT PARTS	The classic fire triangle illustrates the elements necessary to create fire: *oxygen*, *heat*, and *burnable material* (*fuel*). Air provides sufficient oxygen for combustion; the intensity of the heat needed to start a fire depends on the characteristics of the burnable material. A burnable substance is one that will sustain combustion after an initial application of heat to start the combustion.

Definition by Exploration of Origin

Under certain circumstances, the meaning of a term can be clarified and made easier to remember by an exploration of its origin. Medical terms, because of their sometimes unfamiliar Greek and Latin roots, benefit especially from an explanation of this type. Tracing the derivation of a word also can be useful when you want to explain why a word has favorable or unfavorable associations, particularly if your goal is to influence your reader's attitude toward an idea or activity. See also persuasion.

- Efforts to influence legislation generally fall under the head of *lobbying*, a term that once referred to people who prowled the lobbies of houses of government, buttonholing lawmakers and trying to get them to take certain positions. Lobbying today is all of this, and much more, too. It is a respected—and necessary—activity. It tells the legislator which way the winds of public opinion are blow-

ing, and it helps inform [legislators] of the implications of certain bills, debates, and resolutions [that they must face].

— Bill Vogt, *How to Build a Better Outdoors*

Negative Definition

In some cases, it is useful to point out what something is *not* to clarify what it is. A negative definition is effective only when the reader is familiar with the item with which the defined item is contrasted. If you say "*x* is not *y*," your readers must understand the meaning of *y* for the explanation to make sense. In a crane operator's manual, for instance, a negative definition is used to show that, for safety reasons, a hydraulic crane cannot be operated in the same manner as a lattice boom crane.

- A hydraulic crane is *not* like a lattice boom crane [a friction machine] in one very important way. In most cases, the safe lifting capacity of a lattice boom crane is based on the *weight needed to tip the machine*. Therefore, operators of friction machines sometimes depend on signs that the machine might tip to warn them of impending danger. This practice is very dangerous with a hydraulic crane.

  — *Operator's Manual* (Model W-180), Harnischfeger Corporation

description

The key to effective description is the accurate presentation of details, whether for simple or complex descriptions. In Figure D–1, notice that the simple description contained in the purchase order includes five specific details (in addition to the part number) structured logically.

Complex descriptions, of course, involve more details. In describing a mechanical device, for example, describe the whole device and its

PURCHASE ORDER

PART NO.	DESCRIPTION	QUANTITY
IW 8421	Infectious-waste bags, 12″ × 14″, heavy-gauge polyethylene, red double closures with self-sealing adhesive strips	5 boxes containing 200 bags per box

FIGURE D–1. Simple Description

D

The *die block assembly* shown in Figure 1 consists of two machined block sections, eight code punch pins, and a feed punch pin. The larger section, called the die block, is fashioned of a hard noncorrosive beryllium-copper alloy. It houses the eight code punch pins and the smaller feed punch pin in nine finely machined guide holes.

Number of features and relative size differences noted

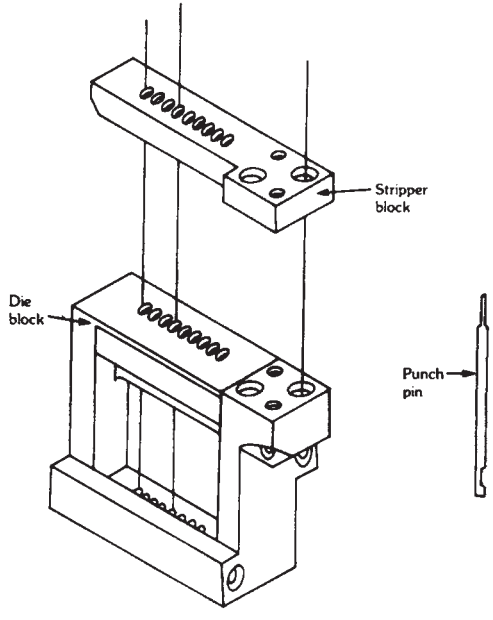


Figure 1. Die Block Assembly

Figure of speech

The guide holes in the upper part of the die block are made smaller to conform to the thinner tips of the feed punch pins. Extending over the top of the die block and secured to it at one end is a smaller, armlike block called the *stripper block*. The stripper block is made from hardened tool steel, and it also has been drilled through with nine finely machined guide holes. It is carefully fitted to the die block at the factory so that its holes will be precisely above those in the die block and so that the space left between the blocks will measure .015″ (± .003″). The residue from the punching operation, called chad, is pushed out through the top of the stripper block and guided out of the assembly by means of a plastic *residue chad collector* and *chad collector extender*.

Definition

FIGURE D–2. Complex Description

function before giving a detailed description of how each part works. The description should conclude with an explanation of how each part contributes to the functioning of the whole.

In descriptions intended for readers who are unfamiliar with the topic, details are crucial. For such an **audience**, show or demonstrate (as opposed to "tell") primarily through the use of images and details. Notice the use of color, shapes, and images in the following description of a company's headquarters. The writer assumes that the reader knows such terms as *colonial design* and *haiku fountain*.

- Their company's headquarters, which reminded me of a rural college campus, are located north of the city in a 90-acre lush green wooded area. The complex consists of five three-story buildings of red-brick colonial design. The buildings are spaced about 50 feet apart and are built in a U-shape surrounding a reflection pool that frames a striking haiku fountain.

You can also use analogy, as described in **figures of speech**, to explain unfamiliar concepts in terms of familiar ones, such as "U-shape" in the previous example or "armlike block" in Figure D–2.

Visuals can be powerful aids in descriptive writing, especially when they show details too intricate to explain completely in words. The example in Figure D–2 uses an illustration to help describe a mechanical assembly for an assembler or repairperson. Note that the description concentrates on the number of pieces—their sizes, shapes, and dimensions—and on their relationship to one another to perform their function. It also specifies the materials of which the hardware is made. Because the description is illustrated (with identifying labels) and is intended for technicians who have been trained on the equipment, it does not require the use of bridging devices to explain the unfamiliar in relation to the familiar. Even so, an important term ("chad") is defined, and crucial alignment dimensions (± .003″) are specified. The illustration is labeled appropriately and integrated with text of the description.

design (*see* layout and design)

despite / in spite of

Although there is no literal difference between *despite* and *in spite of*, *despite* suggests an effort to avoid blame.

- *Despite* our best efforts, the plan failed.
  [We are not to blame for the failure.]

- *In spite of* our best efforts, the plan failed.
  [We did everything possible, but failure overcame us.]

Despite and *in spite of* (both meaning "notwithstanding") should not be blended into *despite of*.

In spite of
- ~~Despite of~~ our best efforts, the plan failed.

diagnosis / prognosis

Because they sound somewhat alike, these words are often confused with each other. *Diagnosis* means "an analysis of the nature of something" or "the conclusions reached by such analysis." ("The meteorological *diagnosis* was that the pollution resulted from natural contaminants.") *Prognosis* means "a forecast or prediction." ("The meteorologist's *prognosis* is that contaminant levels will increase over the next ten years.")

dictionaries

Dictionaries give more than just information about the meanings of words. They often provide words' etymologies (origins and history), forms, pronunciations, **spellings**, uses as **idioms**, and functions as **parts of speech**. For certain words, a dictionary lists **synonyms** and may also provide illustrations, if appropriate, such as tables, maps, photographs, and drawings.

WEB LINK	Online Dictionaries
Dictionaries available on the Web often include a human-voice pronunciation of words and thesaurus links. For a list of current online dictionaries, see ***bedfordstmartins.com/alred*** and select *Links for Handbook Entries*.	

Abridged Dictionaries

Abridged or desk dictionaries contain words commonly used in schools and offices. There is no single "best" dictionary, but you should choose the most recent edition with upward of 200,000 entries. The following are reputable dictionaries:

The American Heritage College Dictionary, 4th ed., with downloadable version, 2010

Microsoft Encarta World English Dictionary, free online edition at *UK.encarta.msn.com/encnet/features/dictionary/dictionaryhome.aspx*

Unabridged Dictionaries

Unabridged dictionaries provide complete and authoritative linguistic information. Because the size and cost of the printed, CD, and online subscription versions are impractical for many individual users, libraries make available these important reference sources.

- *The Oxford English Dictionary* is the standard historical dictionary of the English language. It includes over 500,000 words and gives the chronological developments of over 240,000 words, providing numerous examples of uses and sources. It is available online at *www.oed.com*.
- Merriam Webster offers monthly and annual access to its unabridged dictionary, which features 476,000 definitions, at *www.merriam-webster.com*.

ESL Dictionaries

English-as-a-second-language (ESL) dictionaries are more helpful to the nonnative speaker than are regular English dictionaries or bilingual dictionaries. The pronunciation symbols in ESL dictionaries are based on the international phonetic alphabet rather than on English phonetic systems, and useful grammatical information is included in both the entries and special grammar sections. In addition, the definitions usually are easier to understand than those in regular English dictionaries; for example, a regular English dictionary defines *opaque* as "impervious to the passage of light," while an ESL dictionary defines the word as "not allowing light to pass through." The definitions in ESL dictionaries also are usually more thorough than those in bilingual dictionaries. For example, a bilingual dictionary might indicate that *obstacle* and *blockade* are synonymous—but not indicate that only *obstacle* can be used for abstract meanings. ("Lack of money can be an *obstacle* [not a *blockade*] to a college education.")

The following dictionaries and references provide helpful information for nonnative speakers of English:

Longman English Dictionaries at *http://longmanusahome.com/dictionaries*

Oxford American Wordpower Dictionary for Learners of English at *www.oup.com*

Subject Dictionaries

For the meanings of words too specialized for a general dictionary, a subject dictionary is useful. Subject dictionaries define terms used in a particular field, such as business, geography, architecture, or consumer affairs. Definitions in subject dictionaries are generally more detailed and comprehensive than those found in general dictionaries, but they are written in language that can be understood by nonspecialists. One well-known example is *Stedman's Medical Dictionary* (Lippincott Williams & Wilkins).

differ from / differ with

Differ from suggests that two things are not alike. ("Our earlier proposal *differs from* the current one.") *Differ with* indicates disagreement between persons. ("The architect *differed with* the contractor on the proposed site.")

different from / different than

In formal writing, the preposition *from* is used with *different*. ("The product I received is *different from* the one I ordered.") *Different than* is used when it is followed by a clause. ("The actual cost was *different than* we estimated in our proposal.")

direct address

Direct address refers to a sentence or phrase in which the person being spoken or written to is explicitly named. It is often used in **presentations** and in **e-mail** messages. Notice that the person's name in a direct address is set off by **commas**.

- *John*, call me as soon as you arrive at the airport.
- Call me, *John*, as soon as you arrive at the airport.

discreet / discrete

Discreet means "having or showing prudent or careful behavior." ("Because the matter was personal, he asked Bob to be *discreet*.") *Discrete* means something is "separate, distinct, or individual." ("The court ordered tests on three *discrete* samples.")

disinterested / uninterested

Disinterested means "impartial, objective, unbiased."

- Like good judges, researchers should be passionately interested in the problems they tackle but completely *disinterested* when they seek to solve those problems.

Uninterested means simply "not interested."

- Despite Asha's enthusiasm, her manager remained *uninterested* in the project.

division-and-classification method of development

An effective **method of development** for a complex subject is either to divide it into manageable parts and then discuss each part separately (division) or to classify (or group) individual parts into appropriate categories and discuss each category separately (classification). See also **instructions** and **process explanation**.

Division

You might use division to describe a physical object, such as the parts of a copy machine; to examine an organization, such as a company; or to explain the components of a system, such as the Internet. The emphasis in division as a method of development is on breaking down a complex whole into a number of like units—it is easier to consider smaller units and to examine the relationship of each to the other than to attempt to discuss the whole. The basis for division depends, of course, on your subject and your **purpose**.

If you were a financial planner describing the types of mutual funds available to your investors, you could divide the variety available into

three broad categories: money-market funds, bond funds, and stock funds. Such division would be accurate, but it would be only a first-level grouping of a complex whole. The three broad categories could, in turn, be subdivided into additional groups based on investment strategy, as follows:

Money-market funds

- Taxable money market
- Tax-exempt money market

Bond funds

- Taxable bonds
- Tax-exempt bonds
- Balanced (mix of stocks and bonds)

Stock funds

- Balanced
- Equity income
- Domestic growth
- Growth and income
- International growth
- Small capitalization
- Aggressive growth
- Specialized

Specialized stock funds could be further subdivided as follows:

Specialized funds

- Communications
- Energy
- Environmental services
- Financial services
- Gold
- Health services
- Technology
- Utilities
- Worldwide capital goods

Classification

The process of classification is the grouping of a number of units (such as people, objects, or ideas) into related categories. Consider the following list:

triangular file	steel tape ruler	needle-nose pliers
vise	pipe wrench	keyhole saw
mallet	tin snips	C-clamps
rasp	hacksaw	plane
glass cutter	ball-peen hammer	steel square
spring clamp	claw hammer	utility knife
crescent wrench	folding extension ruler	slip-joint pliers
crosscut saw	tack hammer	utility scissors

To group the items in the list, you would first determine what they have in common. The most obvious characteristic they share is that they all

belong in a carpenter's tool chest. With that observation as a starting point, you can begin to group the tools into related categories. Pipe wrenches belong with slip-joint pliers because both tools grip objects. The rasp and the plane belong with the triangular file because all three tools smooth rough surfaces. By applying this kind of thinking to all the items in the list, you can group (classify) the tools according to function (Figure D–3).

To classify a subject, you must first sort the individual items into the largest number of comparable groups. For explaining the functions of carpentry tools, the classifications (or groups) in Figure D–3 (smoothing,

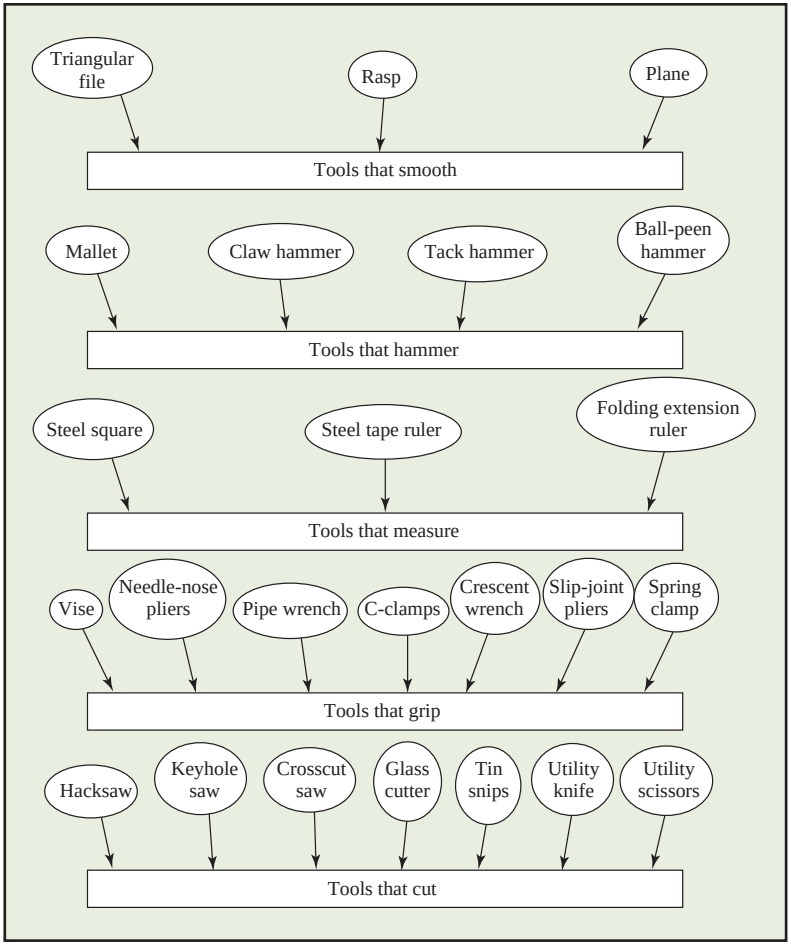


FIGURE D–3. Classification (Tools Placed into Categories)

hammering, measuring, gripping, and cutting) are excellent. For recommending which tools a new homeowner should buy first, however, those classifications are not helpful—each group contains tools that a new homeowner might want to purchase right away. To give homeowners advice on purchasing tools, you probably would classify the types of repairs they most likely will have to do (plumbing, painting, etc.). That classification could serve as a guide to tool purchase.

Once you have established the basis for the classification, apply it consistently, putting each item in only one category. For example, it might seem logical to classify needle-nose pliers as both a tool that cuts and a tool that grips because most needle-nose pliers have a small section for cutting wires. However, the primary function of needle-nose pliers is to grip. So listing them only under "tools that grip" would be consistent with the basis used for listing the other tools.

WEB LINK | **Sample of Division and Classification**

For an example of an outline using division and classification with the resulting document, see ***bedfordstmartins.com/alred*** and select *Links for Handbook Entries*.

documenting sources

DIRECTORY

APA Documentation 134
- APA In-Text Citations 134
- APA Documentation Models 135
- APA Sample Pages 140

IEEE Documentation 142
- IEEE In-Text Citations 142
- IEEE Documentation Models 142
- IEEE Sample Pages 146

MLA Documentation 148
- MLA In-Text Citations 148
- MLA Documentation Models 148
- MLA Sample Pages 153

Documenting sources achieves three important purposes:

- It allows readers to locate and consult the sources used and to find further information on the subject.
- It enables writers to support their assertions and arguments in such documents as **proposals**, **reports**, and **trade journal articles**.

- It helps writers to give proper credit to others and thus avoid **plagiarism** by identifying the sources of facts, ideas, **visuals**, **quotations**, and paraphrases. See also **paraphrasing**.

This entry shows citation models and sample pages for three principal documentation systems: APA, IEEE, and MLA. The following examples compare these three styles for citing a book by one author: *Project Management in New Product Development* by Bruce T. Barkley, which was published in 2007 by McGraw-Hill in New York, New York.

- The American Psychological Association (APA) system of citation is often used in the social sciences. It is referred to as an author-date method of documentation because parenthetical in-text citations and a reference list (at the end of the paper) in APA style emphasize the author(s) and date of publication so that the currency of the research is clear.

APA IN-TEXT CITATION

(Author's Last Name, Year)

(Barkley, 2007)

APA REFERENCES ENTRY

Author's Last Name, Initials. (Year). *Title in italics*. City, State (abbreviated) or Country of Publication: Publisher.

Barkley, B. T. (2007). *Project management in new product development*. New York, NY: McGraw-Hill.

- The system set forth in the *IEEE (Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers, Inc.) Standards Style Manual* is often used for the production of technical documents and standards in areas ranging from computer engineering, biomedical technology, and telecommunications to electric power, aerospace, and consumer electronics. The IEEE system is referred to as a number-style method of documentation because bibliographical reference numbers and a numbered bibliography identify the sources of information.

IEEE IN-TEXT CITATION

[Bibliographical reference number corresponding to a bibliography entry]

IEEE BIBLIOGRAPHY ENTRY

[Bibliographical reference number] Author's Last Name, First and Middle Initial (or Full First Name), *Title in Italics*. Place of Publication: Publisher, Date of Publication, Pages.

[B1] Barkley, B. T., *Project Management in New Product Development*. New York: McGraw-Hill, 2007, pp. 112–125.

- The Modern Language Association (MLA) system is used in literature and the humanities. The MLA style uses parenthetical in-text citations and a list of works cited, and it places greater importance on the pages on which cited information can be found than on the publication date.

MLA IN-TEXT CITATION

(Author's Last Name Page Number)

(Barkley 162)

MLA WORKS-CITED ENTRY

Author's Last Name, First Name. *Title Italicized*. City of Publication: Publisher, Date of Publication. Medium of Publication.

Barkley, Bruce T. *Project Management in New Product Development*. New York: McGraw, 2007. Print.

These systems are described in full detail in the following style manuals:

American Psychological Association. *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association*. 6th ed. Washington, DC: APA, 2010. See also *www.apastyle.org*.

IEEE Standards Style Manual. 2009 ed. New York: IEEE, 2009. See also *http://standards.ieee.org/about/get/index.htm*.

MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers. 7th ed. New York: Modern Language Association of America, 2009. See also *www.mlahandbook.org*.

For additional bibliographic advice and documentation models for types of sources not included in this entry, consult these style manuals or those listed in "Web Link: Other Style Manuals and Documentation Systems" on page 155. See also **bibliographies** and **research**.

APA Documentation

APA In-Text Citations. Within the text of a paper, APA parenthetical documentation gives a brief citation—in parentheses—of the author, year of publication, and a page number for a direct quotation or if it helps locate a passage in a lengthy document.

- Technology has the potential to produce a transformational impact on human life that will enable the human brain to reach beyond its current limitations (Kurzweil, 2006).
- According to Kurzweil (2006), we will witness a "pace of technological change that will be so rapid, its impact so deep, that human life will be irreversibly transformed" (p. 7).

When APA parenthetical citations are needed midsentence, place them after the closing quotation marks and continue with the rest of the sentence.

- In short, "the Singularity" (Kurzweil, 2006, p. 9) is a blending of human biology and technology that will help us develop beyond our human limitations.

If the APA parenthetical citation follows a block quotation, place it after the final punctuation mark.

- . . . a close collaboration with the nursing staff and the hospital bed safety committee is essential. (Jackson, 2008)

When a work has two authors, cite both names joined by an ampersand: (Hinduja & Nguyen, 2008). For the first citation of a work with three through five authors, include all names. For subsequent citations and for works with six or more authors, include only the last name of the first author followed by *et al.* (not italicized and with a period after *al.*). When two or more works by different authors are cited in the same parentheses, list the citations alphabetically and use semicolons to separate them: (Hinduja & Nguyen, 2008; Townsend, 2007).

APA Documentation Models. In reference lists, APA requires that the first word of book and article titles be capitalized and all subsequent words be lowercased. Exceptions include the first word after a colon or dash and proper nouns.

PRINTED BOOKS

Single Author

Taleb, N. N. (2007). *The black swan: The impact of the highly improbable*. New York, NY: Random House.

Multiple Authors

Jones, E., Haenfler, R., & Johnson, B. (2007). *Better world handbook: Small changes that make a big difference*. Gabriola Island, British Columbia, Canada: New Society.

Multiple Books by Same Author

List the works in chronological order, beginning with the earliest.

Gawande, A. (2002). *Complications: A surgeon's notes on an imperfect science.* New York, NY: Picador.

Gawande, A. (2007). *Better: A surgeon's notes on performance.* New York, NY: Picador.

Corporate Author

Microsoft Corporation. (2007). *Windows Vista: The new experience.* Redmond, WA: Microsoft Press.

Edition Other Than First

Kouzes, J. M., & Posner, B. Z. (2007). *The leadership challenge* (4th ed.). New York, NY: Wiley.

Multivolume Work

Knuth, D. E. (2009). *The art of computer programming* (Vol. 4). Boston, MA: Addison-Wesley.

Work in an Edited Collection

Sen, A. (2007). Education and standards of living. In R. Curren (Ed.), *Philosophy of education: An anthology* (pp. 95–101). Malden, MA: Blackwell.

Encyclopedia or Dictionary Entry

Gibbard, B. G. (2007). Particle detector. In *World Book encyclopedia* (Vol. 15, pp. 202–203). Chicago, IL: World Book.

ARTICLES IN PRINTED PERIODICALS

Magazine Article

Austen, B. (2009, August). End of the road: After Detroit, the wreck of an American dream. *Harper's Magazine, 317*(8), 26–36.

Journal Article

Valentine, S., & Fleischman, G. (2008). Ethics programs, perceived corporate social responsibility and job satisfaction. *Journal of Business Ethics, 77,* 159–172.

Article with an Unknown Author

Plant genome organization. (2008). *Science, 320,* 498–501.

Newspaper Article

Chazan, G. (2007, November 29). Can wind power find footing in the deep? *The Wall Street Journal,* p. B1.

ELECTRONIC SOURCES

The APA recommends that, at minimum, references to online sources should provide an author (whenever possible), the date of publication or update (use "(n.d.)" if no date is available), the title of the article, and retrieval information, such as an address (URL or DOI*) that links directly to the document or section. Include the retrieval date only if the content could change. (The retrieval date is not necessary for content with a fixed publication date, such as a journal article.) On the rare occasion that you need to cite multiple pages of a Web site (or the entire site), provide a URL that links to the site's homepage. No periods follow URLs.

Entire Web Site

Society for Technical Communication. (2010). Retrieved from http://www.stc.org

Online Book

Use this form for books made available online or for e-books.

Sowell, T. (2010). *Basic economics: A common sense guide to the economy* (4th ed.). Retrieved from http://books.google.com/books

Short Work from a Web Site, with an Author

Calore, M. (2010, October 7). Personalize your map with a custom map marker. Retrieved from http://www.webmonkey.com/2010/10/personalize-your-map-with-a-custom-map-marker

Short Work from a Web Site, with a Corporate or an Organizational Author

General Motors. (2010). Company profile. Retrieved from http://www.gm.com/corporate/about/company.jsp

Short Work from a Web Site, with an Unknown Author

Timeline: Alaska pipeline chronology. (2006, April 4). *American Experience.* Retrieved from http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/amex/pipeline/timeline/index.html

Article or Other Work from a Database

Gaston, N., & Kishi, T. (2007). Part-time workers doing full-time work in Japan. *Journal of the Japanese and International Economies, 21,* 434–454. doi:10.1016/j.jjie.2006.04.001

*A digital object identifier is the character string used to identify an electronic file.

Article in an Online Periodical, Not Available in Print

Gruener, W. (2008, April 1). Intel fires up new Atom processors. *TG Daily*. Retrieved from http://www.tgdaily.com/content/view/36735/135

Article Posted on a Wiki

Company research databases. (2010, March 31). *The Biz Wiki*. Retrieved October 6, 2010, from http://www.library.ohiou.edu/subjects/bizwiki/index.php/Company_Research_Databases

E-mail Message

E-mail messages are not cited in an APA reference list. They can be cited in the text as follows: "According to J. D. Kahl (personal communication, October 2, 2011), Web pages need to reflect. . . ."

Online Posting (Lists, Forums, Discussion Boards)

Harris, S. (2007, December 5). Camera manual comments [Online forum comment]. Retrieved from http://www.techwr-l.com/archives/0712/techwhirl-0712-00071.html

Blog Entry

Boeninger, C. (2010, August 25). Indexing inaccuracies in Ebsco's Business Source Complete [Web log post]. Retrieved from http://www.library.ohiou.edu/subjects/businessblog/blog/page/2

Publication on CD-ROM

Tapscott, D., & Williams, A. D. (2007). *Wikinomics: How mass collaboration changes everything* [CD-ROM]. Old Saybrook, CT: Tantor.

MULTIMEDIA SOURCES (Electronic and Print)

Include a description of the source in brackets (DVD, Audio podcast, etc.) after the title.

Film, Video, or Podcast

Tracy, B. (Host), & Jeffreys, M. (Director) (2007). *Doubling your productivity* [DVD]. Waterford, MI: Seminars on DVD.

Iowa Public Television. (2007, December 12). National debt impact on national security [Video webcast]. Retrieved from http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hW1UCvqWY2E

Radio or Television Program

Gardner, S. (Reporter), & Vigeland, T. (Host). (2007, December 5). Plug-in hybrids need more juice. *Marketplace* [Audio podcast]. Los Angeles, CA: American Public Media. Retrieved from

http://marketplace.publicradio.org/display/web/2007/12/05/plug_in_cars

Kaku, M. (2010, October 3). In Depth: Michio Kaku. *In Depth* [Television broadcast]. Washington, DC: C-SPAN.

OTHER SOURCES

Visual from Secondary Source

The APA recommends citing the source in which the visual (table or figure) appeared, without mentioning the visual specifically in the reference list. The in-text citation should include a source line (Source: author's last name, year, page number) placed directly below the visual. See also **visuals** and Ethics Note on page 155.

Published Interview

Pitney, J. (2008, January). Q & A [Interview]. *Automobile, 22*(1), 66.

Personal Communications

Personal communications such as lectures, letters, interviews, and e-mail messages are generally not cited in an APA reference list. They can be cited in the text as follows: "According to J. D. Kahl (personal communication, October 2, 2011), Web pages need to reflect. . . ."

Brochure or Pamphlet

Library of Congress, U.S. Copyright Office. (2010). *Copyright basics* [Brochure]. Washington, DC: Government Printing Office.

Government Document

U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics. (2007). *National census of fatal occupational injuries in 2006* (Report No. USDL 07-1202). Washington, DC: Government Printing Office.

Report

Ditch, W. (2007). *XML-based office document standards*. Bristol, England: Higher Education Funding Council for England.

Unpublished Data

Garcia, A. (2008). [Ohio information technology resources, by county]. Unpublished raw data.

APA Sample Pages

Shortened title and page number.

ETHICS CASES 14

This report examines the nature and disposition of the 3,458 ethics cases handled companywide by CGF's ethics officers and managers during 2011. The purpose of such reports is to provide the Ethics and Business Conduct Committee with the information necessary for assessing the effectiveness of the first year of CGF's Ethics Program (Davis, Marks, & Tegge, 2008). According to Matthias Jonas (2008), recommendations are given for consideration "in planning for the second year of the Ethics Program" (p. 152).

One-inch margins. Text double-spaced.

The Office of Ethics and Business Conduct was created to administer the Ethics Program. The director of the Office of Ethics and Business Conduct, along with seven ethics officers throughout CGF, was given the responsibility for the following objectives, as described by Rossouw (2001):

> Communicate the values, standards, and goals of CGF's Program to employees. Provide companywide channels for employee education and guidance in resolving ethics concerns. Implement companywide programs in ethics awareness and recognition. Employee accessibility to ethics information and guidance is the immediate goal of the Office of Business Conduct in its first year. (p. 1543)

Long quote indented one-half inch, double-spaced, without quotation marks.

The purpose of the Ethics Program, established by the Committee, is to "promote ethical business conduct through open communication and compliance with company ethics standards" (Jonas, 2010, p. 89). To accomplish this purpose, any ethics policy must ensure confidentiality and anonymity for employees who raise genuine ethics concerns. The procedure developed at CGF guarantees that employees can

In-text citation gives name, date, and page number.

FIGURE D–4. APA Sample Page from Report

References

Heading centered.

First word of title capitalized and subsequent words lowercased.

List alphabetized by authors' last names and double-spaced.

Hanging-indent style used for entries.

Davis, W. C., Marks, R., & Tegge, D. (2008). *Working in the system: Five new management principles*. New York, NY: St. Martin's Press.

Jonas, M. (2008). The Internet and ethical communication: Toward a new paradigm. *Journal of Ethics and Communication, 32,* 147–177.

Jonas, M. (2010). Ethics in organizational communication: A review of the literature. *Journal of Ethics and Communication, 29,* 79–99.

National Science Foundation. (2011). *Conflicts of interest and standards of ethical conduct*. Arlington, VA: Author.

Rossouw, G. J. (2001). Business ethics in South Africa. *Journal of Business Ethics, 16,* 1539–1547.

Schipper, F. (2011). Transparency and integrity: Contrary concepts? In K. Homann, P. Koslowski, & C. Luetge (Eds.), *Globalisation and business ethics* (pp. 101–118). Burlington, VT: Ashgate.

Smith, T. (Reporter), & Lehrer, J. (Host). (2010). *NewsHour business ethics anthology* [DVD]. Encino, CA: Business Training Media.

FIGURE D–5. APA Sample List of References

IEEE Documentation

IEEE In-Text Citations. IEEE bracketed bibliographical reference numbers within the text of a paper provide sequential numbers that correspond to the full citation in the bibliography: [A1], [A2], etc. The letter within the brackets specifies the annex, or appendix, where the bibliography is located (Annex A, Annex B, etc.). In IEEE style, the bibliography is always placed in an annex. Note that "Annex A" is usually reserved for standards (or *normative references*), whereas "Annex B" is reserved for typical in-text (or *informative*) citations.

- As Peterson writes, preparing a videotape of measurement methods is cost effective and can expedite training [B1].
- The results of these studies have led even the most conservative managers to adopt technologies that will "catapult the industry forward" [B2].

The first bibliographic reference cited in the document should be marked with a footnote that reads as follows:

- [1]The numbers in brackets correspond to those of the bibliography in Annex B.

IEEE Documentation Models

BOOKS

Single Author

[B1] N. N. Taleb, *The Black Swan: The Impact of the Highly Improbable*. New York: Random House, 2007, pp. 165–189.

Multiple Authors

[B2] E. Jones, R. Haenfler, and B. Johnson, *Better World Handbook: Small Changes That Make a Big Difference*. Gabriola Island, BC: New Society, 2007, pp. 129–142.

Corporate Author

[B3] Microsoft Corporation, *Windows Vista: The New Experience*. Redmond, WA: Microsoft Press, 2007, pp. 29–44.

Edition Other Than First

[B4] J. M. Kouzes, and B. Z. Posner, *The Leadership Challenge*, 4th ed. New York: Wiley, 2007, pp. 221–247.

Multivolume Work

[B5] D. E. Knuth, *The Art of Computer Programming*, vol. 4. Boston: Addison-Wesley, 2009, pp. 35–51.

Work in an Edited Collection

[B6] A. Sen, "Education and standards of living," in *Philosophy of Education: An Anthology*, R. Curren, Ed. Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2007, pp. 95–101.

Encyclopedia or Dictionary Entry

[B7] *World Book Encyclopedia*, 2007 ed., s.v. "particle detector."

ARTICLES IN PERIODICALS (*See also* Electronic Sources)

Magazine Article

[B8] E. McGirt, "Facebook opens up," *Fast Company*, pp. 54–89, Nov. 2007.

Journal Article

[B9] S. Valentine, and G. Fleischman, "Ethics programs, perceived corporate social responsibility and job satisfaction," *Journal of Business Ethics*, vol. 77, no. 1, pp. 159–172, 2008.

Article with an Unknown Author

[B10] "Plant genome organization," *Science*, vol. 320, no. 5875, pp. 498–501, 25 Apr. 2008.

Newspaper Article

[B11] G. Chazan, "Can wind power find footing in the deep?" *Wall Street Journal*, sec. B, 29 Nov. 2007.

ELECTRONIC SOURCES

The *IEEE Standards Style Manual*, 2009 ed., includes general information when citing information found on the Internet: If a document listed in a bibliography is accessed from the Internet, the Style Manual recommends that you list the author, date, document title, publication title, medium, and other pertinent publication information, followed by "Available:" and the Internet location. The URL should be the most stable location whenever possible "to avoid inadvertent or intentional changes that would affect the site name," so you should use the index to the page rather than the page itself.

The editors of the *Style Manual* note that their guidelines for citing electronic information are a modified version of the International Standards Organization (ISO) documentation system and APA style.

Entire Web Site

[B12] Society for Technical Communication. (2009–2010). *Society for Technical Communication.* [Online]. Available: http://www.stc.org.

Short Work from a Web Site, with an Author

[B13] M. Calore. (2010, Oct. 7). "Personalize Your Map with a Custom Map Marker." *Webmonkey*. [Online]. Available: http://www.webmonkey.com.

Short Work from a Web Site, with a Corporate Author

[B14] General Motors. (2010). "Company Profile." *General Motors*. [Online]. Available: http://www.gm.com.

Short Work from a Web Site, with an Unknown Author

[B15] "Timeline: Alaska pipeline chronology." (2006, Apr. 4). *The Alaska Pipeline*. [Online]. Available: http://www.pbs.org.

Article or Other Work from a Database

[B16] N. Gaston and T. Kishi. (2007). "Part-time workers doing full-time work in Japan." *Journal of the Japanese and International Economies* [Online]. *21*, 435–454. Available: doi:10.1016/j.jjie.2006.04.001

Article in an Online Periodical

[B17] W. Gruener. (2008, Apr. 1). "Intel fires up new Atom processor." *TG Daily*. [Online]. Available: http://www.tgdaily.com.

MULTIMEDIA SOURCES (Print and Electronic)

Map or Chart

[B18] *Middle East*. Map. Chicago: Rand, 2007.

Film or Video

[B19] "Doubling Your Productivity." *Seminars on DVD*. Hosted by Brian Tracy, directed by Michael Jeffreys. Waterford, MI, 2007.

Television Interview

[B20] M. Khazaee, Interview by Charlie Rose. *The Charlie Rose Show*. Public Broadcasting System, 6 Dec. 2007.

OTHER SOURCES

E-mail

The *IEEE Standards Style Manual* does not provide advice for citing personal communications such as conversations, letters, and e-mail; the *Chicago Manual of Style*, 16th edition, recommends that personal communications are usually cited in the text rather than listed in a bibliography.

Published Interview

[B21] J. Pitney, "Q & A," Interview. *Automobile*, p. 66, Jan. 2008.

Personal Interview

[B22] E. Andersen, Interview by author. Tape recording. San Jose, CA, 29 Nov. 2007.

Personal Letter

Personal communications such as letters, e-mail, and messages from discussion groups and electronic bulletin boards are not cited in an IEEE bibliography.

Brochure or Pamphlet

[B23] Library of Congress, U.S. Copyright Office, *Copyright Basics*. Washington, DC: GPO, 2010, pp. 1–3.

Government Document

[B24] U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, *National Census of Fatal Occupational Injuries in 2006*. Washington, DC: GPO, 2007.

Report

[B25] W. Ditch, *XML-Based Office Document Standards*. Bristol, England: Higher Education Funding Council for England, 2007.

IEEE Sample Pages

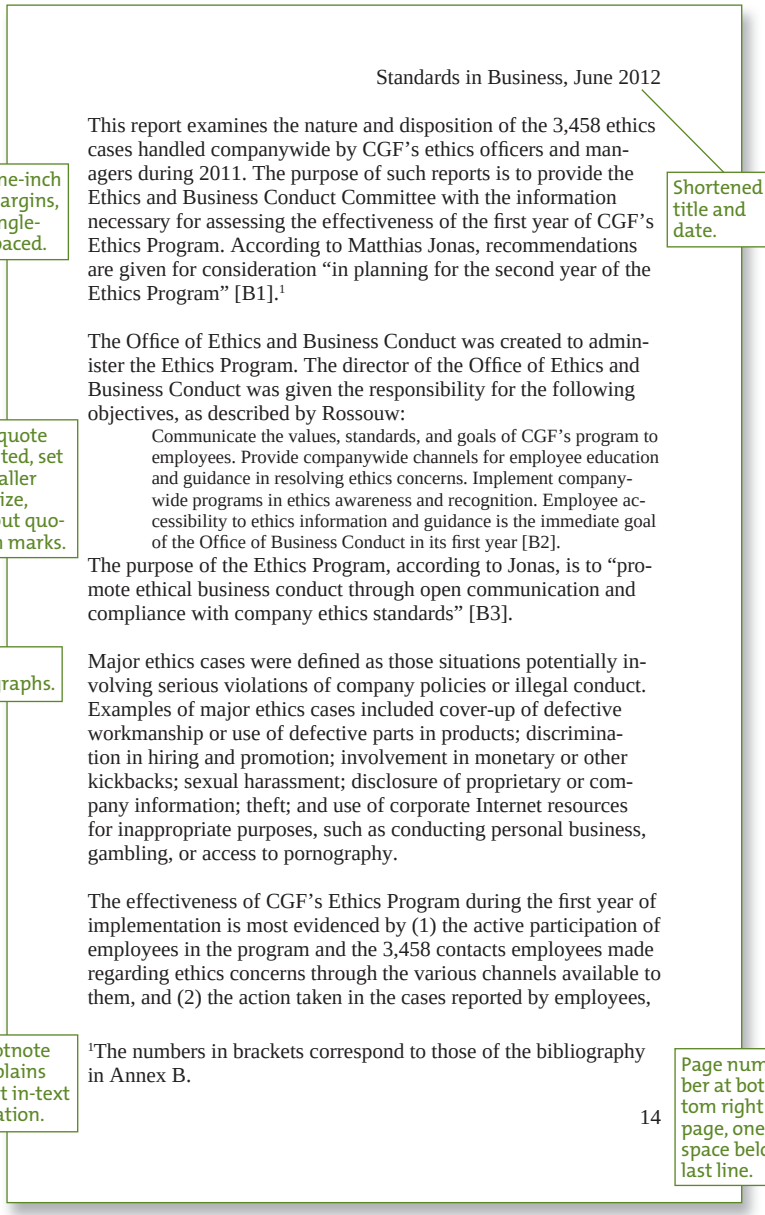

Standards in Business, June 2012
This report examines the nature and disposition of the 3,458 ethics cases handled companywide by CGF's ethics officers and managers during 2011. The purpose of such reports is to provide the Ethics and Business Conduct Committee with the information necessary for assessing the effectiveness of the first year of CGF's Ethics Program. According to Matthias Jonas, recommendations are given for consideration "in planning for the second year of the Ethics Program" [B1].[1]
The Office of Ethics and Business Conduct was created to administer the Ethics Program. The director of the Office of Ethics and Business Conduct was given the responsibility for the following objectives, as described by Rossouw:
Communicate the values, standards, and goals of CGF's program to employees. Provide companywide channels for employee education and guidance in resolving ethics concerns. Implement companywide programs in ethics awareness and recognition. Employee accessibility to ethics information and guidance is the immediate goal of the Office of Business Conduct in its first year [B2].
The purpose of the Ethics Program, according to Jonas, is to "promote ethical business conduct through open communication and compliance with company ethics standards" [B3].
Major ethics cases were defined as those situations potentially involving serious violations of company policies or illegal conduct. Examples of major ethics cases included cover-up of defective workmanship or use of defective parts in products; discrimination in hiring and promotion; involvement in monetary or other kickbacks; sexual harassment; disclosure of proprietary or company information; theft; and use of corporate Internet resources for inappropriate purposes, such as conducting personal business, gambling, or access to pornography.
The effectiveness of CGF's Ethics Program during the first year of implementation is most evidenced by (1) the active participation of employees in the program and the 3,458 contacts employees made regarding ethics concerns through the various channels available to them, and (2) the action taken in the cases reported by employees,
[1]The numbers in brackets correspond to those of the bibliography in Annex B.
14
One-inch margins, single-spaced.
Shortened title and date.
Long quote indented, set in smaller font size, without quotation marks.
Block paragraphs.
Footnote explains first in-text citation.
Page number at bottom right of page, one space below last line.

FIGURE D–6. IEEE Sample Page from Report

Standards in Business, June 2008

Annex B

(informative)

Bibliography

Bibliography labeled "informative" in 14-point type within parentheses.

Title in bold; 16-point type.

List in order of appearance in document.

Single-spaced block entries.

[B1] M. Jonas, "The internet and ethical communication: Toward a new paradigm," *Journal of Ethics and Communication*, vol. 32, pp. 147–177, Fall 2008.

[B2] G. J. Rossouw, "Business ethics in South Africa," *Journal of Business Ethics*, vol. 16, no. 14, pp. 1539–1547, 2001.

[B3] M. Jonas, "Ethics in organizational communication: A review of the literature," *Journal of Ethics and Communication*, vol. 29, pp. 77–99, Summer 2010.

[B4] W. C. Davis, R. Marks, and D. Tegge, *Working in the System: Five New Management Principles*. New York: St. Martin's, 2008, pp. 18–42.

[B5] F. Schipper, "Transparency and integrity: Contrary concepts?" in *Globalisation and Business Ethics*, Karl Homann, Peter Koslowski, and Christoph Luetge, Eds. Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2011, pp. 101–118.

[B6] M. Sariolgholam, Interview by author. Tape recording. Berkeley, CA, 29 Jan. 2012.

[B7] United States. National Science Foundation, *Conflicts of Interest and Standards of Ethical Conduct*. Arlington, VA: National Science Foundation, 2011, pp. 1–10.

[B8] International Business Ethics Institute. (1994–2008). *International Business Institute* [Online]. 1994–2008.*

[B9] *NewsHour Business Ethics Anthology*. DVD. Hosted by Jim Lehrer. Business Training Media, Encino, CA, 2010.

*Available at www.business-ethics.org.

20

FIGURE D–7. IEEE Sample Bibliography

MLA Documentation

MLA In-Text Citations. The MLA parenthetical citation within the text of a paper gives a brief citation—in parentheses—of the author and relevant page numbers, separated only by a space.

- We will witness a "pace of technological change that will be so rapid, its impact so deep, that human life will be irreversibly transformed" (Kurzweil 7).

If the author is cited in the text, include only the page number(s) in parentheses.

- Kurzweil predicts that technology has the potential to produce a transformational impact on human life that will enable the human brain to reach beyond its current limitations (7).

When citing Web sites where no author or page reference is available, provide a short title of the work in parentheses.

- In 1810, Peter Durand invented the can, which was later used to provide soldiers and explorers canned rations and ultimately "saved legions from sure starvation" ("Forgotten Inventors").

If the parenthetical citation refers to a long, indented quotation, place it outside the punctuation of the last sentence.

- . . . a close collaboration with the nursing staff and the hospital bed safety committee is essential. (Jackson 208)

If no author is named or if you are using more than one work by the same author, give a shortened version of the title in the parenthetical citation, unless you name the title in the text (a "signal phrase"). A citation for Quint Studer's book *Results That Last: Hardwiring Behaviors That Will Take Your Company to the Top* would appear as (Studer, *Results* 93).

MLA Documentation Models

PRINTED BOOKS

Single Author

Taleb, Nassim Nicholas. *The Black Swan: The Impact of the Highly Improbable*. New York: Random, 2007. Print.

Multiple Authors

Jones, Ellis, Ross Haenfler, and Brett Johnson. *Better World Handbook: Small Changes That Make a Big Difference*. Gabriola Island, BC: New Society, 2007. Print.

Multiple Books by Same Author

List the works in alphabetical order by title.

Gawande, Atul. *Better: A Surgeon's Notes on Performance*. New York: Picador, 2007. Print.

---. *Complications: A Surgeon's Notes on an Imperfect Science*. New York: Picador, 2002. Print.

Corporate Author

Microsoft Corporation. *Windows Vista: The New Experience*. Redmond: Microsoft Press, 2007. Print.

Edition Other Than First

Kouzes, James M., and Barry Z. Posner. *The Leadership Challenge*. 4th ed. New York: Wiley, 2007. Print.

Multivolume Work

Knuth, Donald E. *The Art of Computer Programming*. 4 vols. Boston: Addison-Wesley, 2009. Print.

Work in an Edited Collection

Sen, Amartya. "Education and Standards of Living." *Philosophy of Education: An Anthology*. Ed. Randall Curren. Malden: Blackwell, 2007. 95-101. Print.

Encyclopedia or Dictionary Entry

Gibbard, Bruce G. "Particle Detector." *World Book Encyclopedia*. 2007. Print.

ARTICLES IN PRINTED PERIODICALS (*See also* Electronic Sources)

Magazine Article

McGirt, Ellen. "Facebook Opens Up." *Fast Company* Nov. 2007: 54-89. Print.

Journal Article

Valentine, Sean, and Gary Fleischman. "Ethics Programs, Perceived Corporate Social Responsibility, and Job Satisfaction." *Journal of Business Ethics* 77.1 (2008): 159-72. Print.

Article with an Unknown Author

"Plant Genome Organization." *Science* 320.5875 (2008): 498-501. Print.

Newspaper Article

Chazan, Guy. "Can Wind Power Find Footing in the Deep?" *Wall Street Journal* 29 Nov. 2007: B1+. Print.

ELECTRONIC SOURCES

The MLA recommends that, at minimum, references to online sources provide the author's name (whenever possible), a title for the article (in quotation marks), the title of the Web site (italicized), the name of the publisher or sponsor of the Web site, the publication date (posted or updated), the medium (Web), and the date of access.

Entire Web Site

Society for Technical Communication. Soc. for Technical Communication, 2009-2010. Web. 18 Oct. 2010.

Online Book

Sowell, Thomas. *Basic Economics: A Common Sense Guide to the Economy*. 4th ed. New York: Basic, 2010. *Google Book Search*. Web. 12 Oct. 2010.

Short Work from a Web Site, with an Author

Calore, Michael. "Personalize Your Map with a Custom Map Marker." *Webmonkey*. Condé Nast Digital, 7 Oct. 2010. Web. 18 Oct. 2010.

Short Work from a Web Site, with a Corporate or an Organizational Author

General Motors. "Company Profile." *General Motors*. General Motors Co., 2010. Web. 8 Nov. 2010.

Short Work from a Web Site, with an Unknown Author

"Timeline: Alaska Pipeline Chronology." *American Experience*. WGBH, 4 Apr. 2006. Web. 22 Mar. 2010.

Article or Other Work from a Database

Gaston, Noel, and Tomoka Kishi. "Part-time Workers Doing Full-time Work in Japan." *Journal of the Japanese and International Economies* 21.4 (2007): 435-54. *Business Source Premier*. Web. 25 Oct. 2010.

Article in an Online Periodical

Gruener, Wolfgang. "Intel Fires Up New Atom Processors." *TG Daily*. DD&M, 1 Apr. 2008. Web. 29 Apr. 2010.

Article Posted on a Wiki

"Company Research Databases." *Biz Wiki*. Ohio U. Lib., 31 Mar. 2010. Web. 6 Oct. 2010.

E-mail Message

Kalil, Ari. "Technical Support Survey." Message to the author. 12 Jan. 2010. E-mail.

Online Posting (Lists, Forums, Discussion Boards)

Harris, Sandy. "Camera Manual Comments." *TECHWR-L*. RayComm, Inc., 5 Dec. 2007. Web. 8 Feb. 2010.

Blog Entry

Boeninger, Chad. "Indexing Inaccuracies in Ebsco's Business Source Complete." *Business Blog*. Ohio U. Lib., 25 Aug. 2010. Web. 6 Oct. 2010.

Publication on CD-ROM

Tapscott, Don, and Anthony D. Williams. *Wikinomics: How Mass Collaboration Changes Everything*. Old Saybrook: Tantor, 2007. CD-ROM.

MULTIMEDIA SOURCES (Print and Electronic)

Film, Video, or Podcast

Doubling Your Productivity. Perf. Brian Tracy. Dir. Michael Jeffreys. Waterford: Seminars on DVD, 2007. DVD.

Iowa Public Television. "National Debt Impact on National Security." *YouTube*. 12 Dec. 2007. Web. 13 Oct. 2010.

Radio or Television Program

Treat a program that you listen to or view online as a short work from a Web site.

Gardner, Sarah. "Plug-in Hybrids Need More Juice." *Marketplace*. Host Tess Vigeland. Amer. Public Media, 5 Dec. 2007. Web. 11 Feb. 2010.

Kaku, Michio. "In Depth: Michio Kaku." *In Depth*. Host Peter Slen. C-SPAN. 3 Oct. 2010. Television.

Television Interview

Khazaee, Mohammad. Interview by Charlie Rose. *Charlie Rose Show*. PBS. WGBH, Boston. 6 Dec. 2007. Television.

OTHER SOURCES

Visual from a Secondary Source

Tables and figures (graphs, charts, maps, photographs, and drawings) are classified as visuals in MLA style. Cite the artist or author (if available), title of visual (italicized), type of visual, the original publication date (if available), and the institution where it is located (if applicable). Follow with identifying information about the medium (Print, Web, Television, CD, Film, etc.) in which the visual appeared. The in-text citation should include a source line placed

directly below the visual, as shown in the following example. See also **visuals**.

Source: Jo Mackiewicz, "Compliments and Criticisms in Book Reviews about Business Communication." *Journal of Business and Technical Communication* 21.2 (2007): 205. Print.

Mackiewicz, Jo. "Criticism Mitigation Strategies." Table. "Compliments and Criticisms in Book Reviews about Business Communication." *Journal of Business and Technical Communication* 21.2 (2007): 205. Print.

"Global Warming Effects Map." *National Geographic*. Natl. Geographic Soc., n.d. Web. 22 Sept. 2010.

See also Ethics Note on page 155.

Interview

Pitney, Jack. "Q & A." *Automobile* Jan. 2008: 66. Print.

Personal Interview

Andersen, Elizabeth. Personal interview. 29 Nov. 2007.

Personal Letter

Pascatore, Monica. Letter to the author. 10 Apr. 2008. MS.

Brochure or Pamphlet

Library of Congress. US Copyright Office. *Copyright Basics*. Washington: GPO, 2010. Print.

Government Document

United States. Dept. of Labor. Bureau of Labor Statistics. *National Census of Fatal Occupational Injuries in 2006*. Rept. No. USDL 07-1202. Washington: GPO, 2007. Print.

Report

Ditch, Walter. *XML-Based Office Document Standards*. Bristol, Eng.: Higher Educ. Funding Council for England, 2007. Print.

Lecture or Speech

Nicholas, Ilene M. Demarest Hall, Hobart and William Smith Colls., Geneva. 3 May 2008. Lecture.

Yaden, Ryan. "Evolving Architecture around the Globe." Boston Soc. of Architects Lecture Ser. Boston Public Lib. 28 May 2008. Lecture.

MLA Sample Pages

Author's last name and page number.

This report examines the nature and disposition of the 3,458 ethics cases handled companywide by CGF's ethics officers and managers during 2011. The purpose of such reports is to provide the Ethics and Business Conduct Committee with the information necessary for assessing the effectiveness of the first year of CGF's Ethics Program (Davis, Marks, and Tegge 142). According to Matthias Jonas, recommendations are given for consideration "in planning for the second year of the Ethics Program" ("Internet" 152).

One-inch margins. Text double-spaced.

The Office of Ethics and Business Conduct was created to administer the Ethics Program. The director of the Office of Ethics and Business Conduct, along with seven ethics officers throughout CGF, was given the responsibility for the following objectives, as described by Rossouw:

Long quote indented one inch (or 10 spaces), double-spaced, without quotation marks.

> Communicate the values, standards, and goals of CGF's Program to employees. Provide companywide channels for employee education and guidance in resolving ethics concerns. Implement companywide programs in ethics awareness and recognition. Employee accessibility to ethics information and guidance is the immediate goal of the Office of Business Conduct in its first year. (1543)

The purpose of the Ethics Program, according to Jonas, is to "promote ethical business conduct through open communication and compliance with company ethics standards" ("Ethics" 89). To accomplish this purpose, any ethics policy must ensure confidentiality for anyone

In-text citations give author name and page number. Title used when multiple works by same author cited.

FIGURE D–8. MLA Sample Page from Report

Heading centered.

List alphabetized by authors' last names or title and double-spaced.

Hanging-indent style used for entries.

Works Cited

Davis, W. C., Roland Marks, and Diane Tegge. *Working in the System: Five New Management Principles.* New York: St. Martin's, 2008. Print.

International Business Ethics Institute. Intl. Business Ethics Inst., 1994-2008. Web. 19 Jan. 2010.

Jonas, Matthias. "Ethics in Organizational Communication: A Review of the Literature." *Journal of Ethics and Communication* 29 (2010): 79-99. Print.

---. "The Internet and Ethical Communication: Toward a New Paradigm." *Journal of Ethics and Communication* 32 (2008): 147-77. Print.

Rossouw, George J. "Business Ethics in South Africa." *Journal of Business Ethics* 16.14 (2001): 1539-47. Print.

Sariolgholam, Mahmood. Personal interview. 29 Jan. 2012.

Schipper, Fritz. "Transparency and Integrity: Contrary Concepts?" *Globalisation and Business Ethics*. Ed. Karl Homann, Peter Koslowski, and Christoph Luetge. Burlington: Ashgate, 2011. 101-18. Print.

Smith, Terence. "Legislating Ethics." *NewsHour Business Ethics Anthology*. Host Jim Lehrer. Encino: Business Training Media, 2010. DVD.

United States. Natl. Science Foundation. *Conflicts of Interest and Standards of Ethical Conduct*. NSF Manual No. 15. Arlington: Natl. Science Foundation, 2011. Print.

FIGURE D–9. MLA Sample List of Works Cited

❖ ETHICS NOTE Visuals under copyright require permission from copyright owners before they can be reproduced. Contact the publisher to find out what needs permission, how best to obtain it, and what information copyright owners require in source lines and reference entries. Source lines almost always require mention of permission from the copyright owner to reproduce. ❖

WEB LINK	Other Style Manuals and Documentation Systems

Many professional societies, publishing companies, and other organizations publish manuals that prescribe bibliographic reference formats for their publications or for publications in their fields. For example, the American Medical Association (AMA) publishes the *American Medical Association Manual of Style*. For links to style manuals and other documentation resources, see ***bedfordstmartins.com/alred*** and select *Links for Handbook Entries*.

double negatives

A double negative is the use of an additional negative word to reinforce an expression that is already negative. In writing and speech, avoid such constructions.

UNCLEAR We don't have none.
[This sentence literally means that we have some.]

CLEAR We have none.

Barely, *hardly*, and *scarcely* cause problems because writers sometimes do not recognize that those words are already negative.

- The corporate policy ~~doesn't~~ hardly cover^s the problem.

Not unfriendly, *not without*, and similar constructions are not double negatives because in such constructions two negatives are meant to suggest the gray area between negative and positive meanings. Be careful how you use such constructions; they can be confusing to the reader and should be used only if they serve a purpose.

- He is *not unfriendly*.
  [He is neither hostile nor friendly.]
- It is *not without* regret that I offer my resignation.
  [I have mixed feelings rather than only regret.]

The correlative **conjunctions** *neither* and *nor* may appear together in a clause without creating a double negative, so long as the writer does not attempt to use the word *not* in the same clause.

D

- It was ~~not,~~ *neither,* as a matter of fact, ~~neither~~ his duty nor his desire to dismiss the employee.
- It was not, as a matter of fact, ~~neither~~ *either* his duty ~~nor~~ *or* his desire to dismiss the employee.
- She ~~did not~~ neither ~~care~~ *cared* about nor ~~notice~~ *noticed* the error.

Negative forms are full of traps that often entice writers into **logic errors**, as illustrated in the following example:

ILLOGICAL The book reveals *nothing* that has *not* already been published in some form, but some of it is, I believe, relatively unknown.

In this sentence, "some of it" logically can refer only to "*nothing* that has *not* already been published." The sentence can be corrected by stating the idea in more **positive writing**.

LOGICAL Everything in the book has been published in some form, but some of it is, I believe, relatively unknown.

drawings

A drawing can depict an object's appearance and illustrate the steps in procedures or **instructions**. It can emphasize the significant parts or functions of a device or product, omit what is not significant, and focus on details or relationships that a **photograph** cannot reveal. Think about your need for drawings during your **preparation** and **research**. Include them in your outline, indicating approximately where each should be placed ("drawing of . . ." enclosed in brackets). For advice on integrating drawings into your text, see **visuals**.

The types of drawings discussed in this entry are conventional line drawings, exploded-view drawings, cutaway drawings, schematic diagrams, and clip-art images.

A conventional line drawing is appropriate if your **audience** needs an overview of a series of steps or an understanding of an object's appearance or construction, as in Figure D–10.

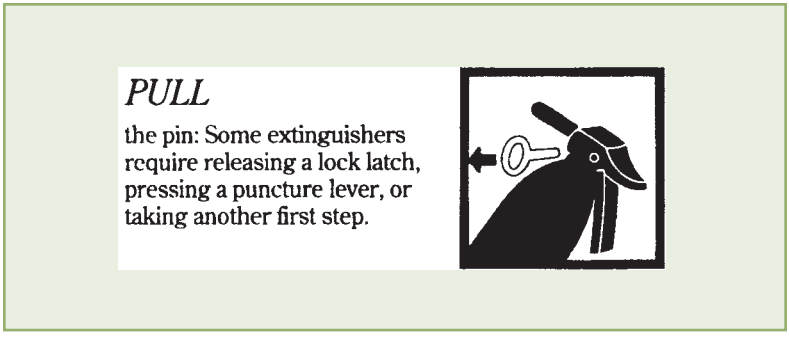


FIGURE D–10. Conventional Line Drawing Illustrating Instructions

An exploded-view drawing, like that in Figure D–11, can be useful when you need to show the proper sequence in which parts fit together or to show the details of individual parts. Figure D–11 shows owners of a Xerox WorkCentre copier how to safely unpack the machine and its key parts.

A cutaway drawing, like the one in Figure D–12, can be useful when you need to show the internal parts of a device or structure and illustrate their relationship to the whole.

Schematic diagrams (or schematics) are drawings that portray the operation of electrical and mechanical systems, using lines and symbols rather than physical likenesses. Schematics are useful in instructions or descriptions—for example, when you need to emphasize the relationships among parts without giving their precise proportions.

The schematic diagram in Figure D–13 depicts the process of trapping particulates from coal-fired power plants. Note that the particulate filter is depicted both symbolically and as an enlarged drawing to show relevant structural details. Schematic symbols generally represent equipment, gauges, and electrical or electronic components.

If you need only general-interest images to illustrate **newsletters** and **brochures** or to create **presentation** slides, use noncopyrighted clip-art drawings from your word-processing program or from thousands of noncopyrighted Web and library sources or consider specialty clip-art images (as shown in Figure D–14).

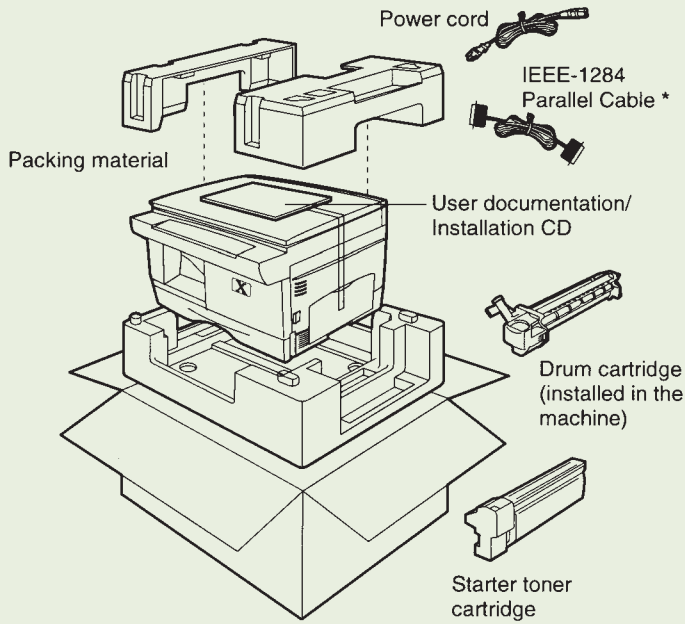
❖ ETHICS NOTE Do not use drawings from copyrighted sources without permission and proper documentation, including from the Web—the same copyright laws that apply to printed material also apply to Web-based graphics. See also **copyright**, **documenting sources**, and **plagiarism**. ❖

D

Installation

As you unpack the WorkCentre, familiarize yourself with its contents. After the WorkCentre is installed, and the Ready Indicator is lit, the WorkCentre is ready to make copies.

IMPORTANT: Save the carton and packing materials. They should be used to repack the WorkCentre if it has to be shipped for servicing or in case you move.



* **Note:** To ensure reliability of the WorkCentre, use the IEEE-1284 compliant parallel cable that is supplied with the machine. Only cables labeled "IEEE-1284" can be used with your WorkCentre.

Figure D–11. Exploded-View Drawing

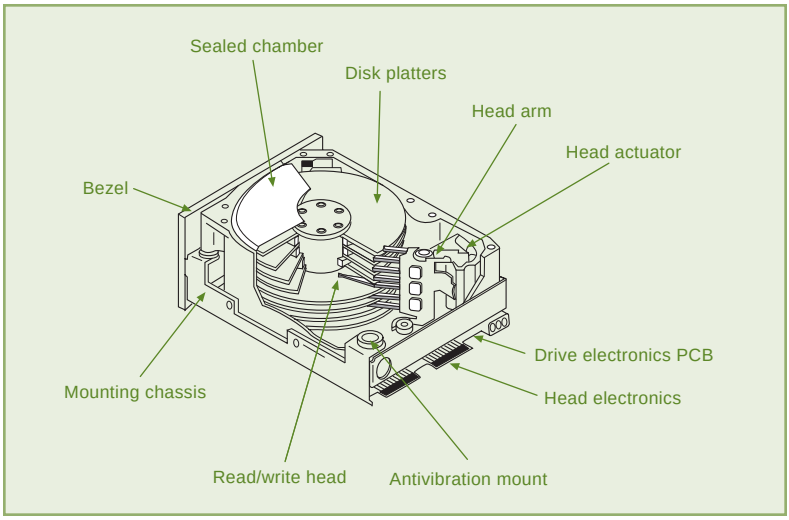


FIGURE D–12. Cutaway Drawing of Disk Drive

WRITER'S CHECKLIST **Creating and Using Drawings**

- ✔ Seek the help of graphics specialists for drawings that require a high degree of accuracy and precision.
- ✔ Show equipment and other objects from the point of view of the person who will use them.
- ✔ When illustrating a subsystem, show its relationship to the larger system of which it is a part.
- ✔ Draw the parts of an object in proportion to one another and identify any parts that are enlarged or reduced.
- ✔ When a sequence of drawings is used to illustrate a process, arrange them from left to right or from top to bottom on the page.
- ✔ Label parts in the drawing so that the text references to them are clear and consistent.
- ✔ Depending on the complexity of what is shown, label the parts themselves, as in Figure D–11, or use a key, as in Figure G–11 on page 248.

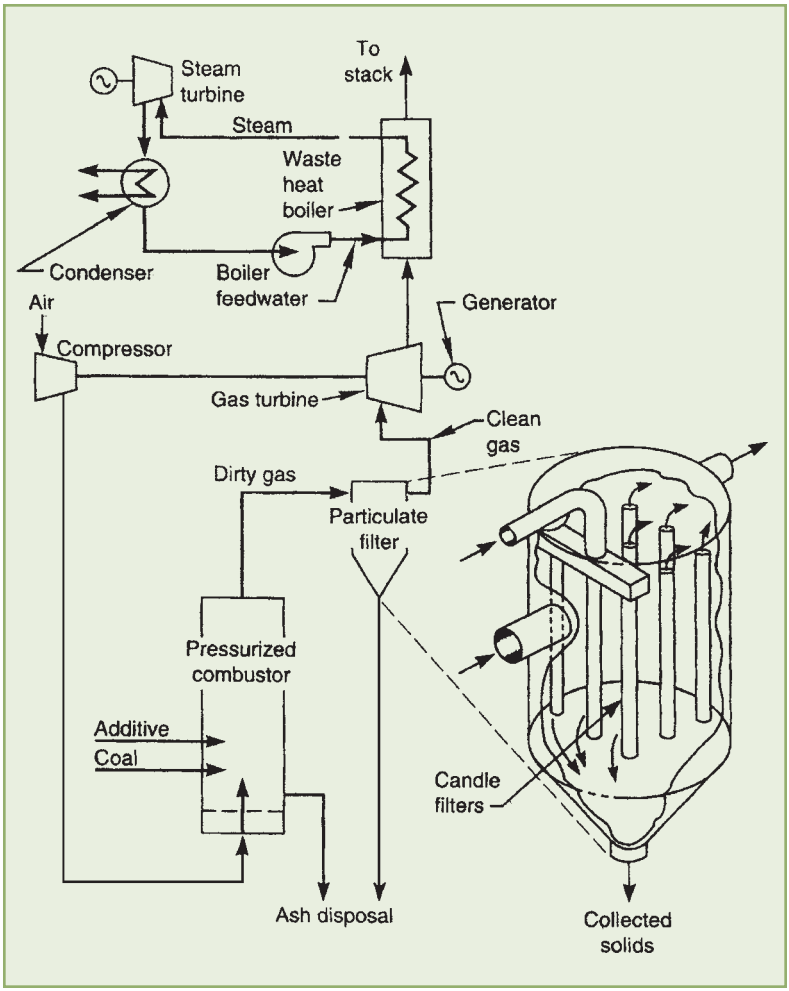


FIGURE D–13. Schematic Diagram of Particulate Removal Process

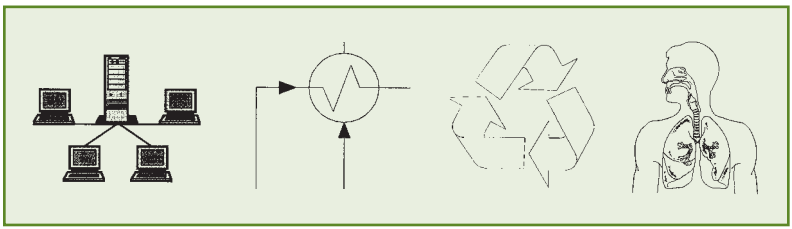


FIGURE D–14. Specialty Clip-Art Images

due to / because of

Due to (meaning "caused by") is acceptable following a linking **verb**.

- His absence was *due to* a work-related injury.

Due to is not acceptable, however, when it is used with a nonlinking verb to replace *because of*.

- He left work ~~due to~~ *because of* illness.

E

each

When *each* is used as a subject, it takes a singular **verb** or **pronoun**. ("*Each* of the reports *is* to be submitted ten weeks after *it* is assigned.") When *each* refers to a plural subject, it takes a plural verb or pronoun. ("The reports *each have* company logos on *their* title pages.") See also **agreement** and **conciseness**.

economic / economical

Economic refers to the production, development, and management of material wealth. ("Technology infrastructure has an *economic* impact on communities.") *Economical* simply means "not wasteful or extravagant." ("Employees should be as *economical* as possible in their equipment purchases.")

editing (*see both* revision *and* proofreading)

e.g. / i.e.

The abbreviation *e.g.* stands for the Latin *exempli gratia*, meaning "for example"; *i.e.* stands for the Latin *id est*, meaning "that is." Because the English expressions (*for example* and *that is*) are clear to all **readers**, avoid the Latin *e.g.* and *i.e.* **abbreviations** except to save space in notes and **visuals**. If you must use *i.e.* or *e.g.*, do not italicize either and punctuate them as follows. If *i.e.* or *e.g.* connects two independent clauses, a **semicolon** should precede it and a **comma** should follow it.

- The conference reflected international viewpoints; *e.g.*, speakers included Germans, Italians, Japanese, Chinese, and Americans.

If *i.e.* or *e.g.* connects a **noun** and an **appositive**, a comma should precede it and follow it.

- The conference included speakers from five countries, *i.e.*, Germany, Italy, Japan, China, and the United States.

ellipses

An ellipsis is the omission of words from quoted material; it is indicated by three spaced **periods** called *ellipsis points* (. . .). When you use ellipsis points, omit original punctuation marks, unless they are necessary for **clarity** or the omitted material comes at the end of a quoted sentence.

ORIGINAL TEXT	"Promotional material sometimes carries a fee, particularly in high-volume distribution to schools, although prices for these publications are much lower than the development costs when all factors are considered."
WITH OMISSION AND ELLIPSIS POINTS	"Promotional material sometimes carries a fee . . . although prices for these publications are much lower than the development costs. . . ."

Notice in the preceding example that the final period is retained and what remains of the quotation is grammatically complete. When the omitted part of the quotation is preceded by a period, retain the period and add the three ellipsis points after it, as in the following example.

ORIGINAL TEXT	"Of the 172 major ethics cases reported, 57 percent were found to involve unsubstantiated concerns. Misinformation was the cause of unfounded concerns of misconduct in 72 cases. Forty-four cases, or 26 percent of the total cases reported, involved incidents partly substantiated by ethics officers as serious misconduct."
WITH OMISSION AND ELLIPSIS POINTS	"Of the 172 major ethics cases reported, 57 percent were found to involve unsubstantiated concerns. . . . Forty-four cases, or 26 percent of the total cases reported, involved incidents partly substantiated by ethics officers as serious misconduct."

Do not use ellipsis points when the beginning of a quoted sentence is omitted. Notice in the following example that the comma is dropped to prevent a grammatical error. See also **quotations**.

- The ethics report states that "26 percent of the total cases reported involved incidents partly substantiated by ethics officers as serious misconduct."

E

e-mail

DIRECTORY

Review and Confidentiality 164
Writer's Checklist: Observing Workplace Netiquette 165
Design Considerations 166
Salutations, Closings, and Signature Blocks 167
Writer's Checklist: Managing Your E-mail and Reducing Overload 168

E-mail (or *email*) functions in the workplace as a medium to exchange information and share electronic files with colleagues, clients, and customers. Although e-mail messages may take the form of informal notes, you should follow the writing strategy and style described in **correspondence** because e-mail messages often function as business **letters** to those outside organizations and **memos** to those within organizations. Of course, memos and letters can also be attached to e-mails. This entry reviews topics that are specifically related to the medium of e-mail. See also **selecting the medium**.

Review and Confidentiality

E-mail is such a quick and easy way to communicate that you need to avoid the temptation of sending a first draft without revision. As with all correspondence, your message should include all crucial details and be free of grammatical or factual errors, ambiguities, or unintended implications. See **proofreading** and **spelling**.

Keep in mind that e-mail can be easily forwarded and that e-mail messages are never truly deleted. Most companies back up and save all their e-mail messages and are legally entitled to monitor e-mail use. Companies can be compelled, depending on circumstances, to provide e-mail and **instant messaging** logs in a court of law. Consider the content of all your messages in the light of these possibilities, and carefully review your text before you click "Send."

PROFESSIONALISM NOTE Be especially careful when sending messages to superiors in your organization or to people outside the organization. Spending extra time reviewing your e-mail before you click "Send" can

save you the embarrassment of misunderstandings caused by a carelessly written message. One helpful strategy is to write the draft and revise your e-mail before filling in the "To" line with the address of your recipient. Be careful as well to observe the rules of netiquette (Inter*net* + *etiquette*) in the *Writer's Checklist* that follows.

WRITER'S CHECKLIST **Observing Workplace Netiquette**

- ✔ Review your organization's policy regarding the appropriate use of e-mail.
- ✔ Maintain a high level of professionalism in your use of e-mail.
  - Do not forward jokes or *spam*, discuss office gossip, or use **biased language**.
  - Do not send *flames* (e-mails that contain abusive, obscene, or derogatory language) to attack someone. See also **blogs and forums**.
  - Do not use clever or hobby-related e-mail usernames (sushilover@domain.com); professionals and companies often base them on personal names (msmith@domain.com).
- ✔ Provide a subject line that describes the topic and focus of your message (as described on page 113) to help recipients manage their e-mail.
- ✔ Adapt forwarded messages: revise the subject line to reflect the current content and cut irrelevant previous text, based on your **purpose** and **context**.
- ✔ Use the "cc:" (courtesy copy) address line thoughtfully to keep others informed and follow your organization's practice or protocol for copying messages to others.
- ✔ Include a cover message for all e-mail messages with attachments ("Attached is a copy of my budget proposal for your review. . . .").
- ✔ Send a "courtesy response" informing someone when you need a few days or longer to reply to a request.
- ✔ Do not write in ALL UPPERCASE LETTERS or in all lowercase letters.
- ✔ Avoid abbreviations (BTW for *by the way*, for example) used in personal e-mail, chat rooms, and **text messaging**.
- ✔ Do not use emoticons (keyboard characters used for conveying emotions) in business and professional e-mail.
- ✔ Always sign the e-mail or use a signature block (see Figure E–1 on page 168) or both; doing so not only is polite but also avoids possible confusion.

❖ ETHICS NOTE The blind-copy (*bcc:*) function allows writers to send copies of an e-mail message to someone without the primary receiver's knowledge. For printed letters and memos, the bcc: notation serves the same function and thus appears only on the copy, not on the original.* The blind-copy function may be used ethically for e-mails to protect the privacy of the e-mail addresses for a large group of recipients. Use the bcc: notation with great care. Sending sensitive or confidential information to a third party without the original recipient's knowledge is unethical, as is the use of a blind copy to play office politics. ❖

Design Considerations

Most e-mail programs allow you to use typographical features, such as various fonts and bullets. These options, however, may display unpredictably with some e-mail systems and settings of clients and customers outside your organization. In such circumstances, set your e-mail preferences to send messages in "plain text" and consider using alternative highlighting devices. For example, capital letters or asterisks, used sparingly, can substitute for boldface, italics, and underlines as **emphasis**.

If you find that you need many special characters or design elements, consider preparing a document that you attach to an e-mail. Doing so will allow you to use formatted elements, such as bulleted **lists** and **tables** that do not transmit well in e-mail messages. Keep in mind the following additional design considerations when sending e-mail:

- Use short paragraphs to avoid dense blocks of text.
- Provide a brief paragraph overview at the top of messages that run longer than a screen of text.
- Place your response to someone else's message at the beginning (or top) of the e-mail window so that recipients can see your response immediately.

*The abbreviation "bcc:" originally referred to the term *blind carbon copy* when copies of letters could only be produced on a typewriter using carbon paper. The bcc: notation (*bcc: Dr. Brenda Shelton*) was separately typed on only the copied pages. Even though technology changed, the abbreviation bcc: was retained but is often defined as "blind courtesy copy."

DIGITAL TIP

Sharing Electronic Files

Large attachments to e-mails can slow the transmission speed of messages and clutter the in-boxes of your recipients. When you need to send large attachments or a collection of several attachments, consider an alternative: using one of the many free online services designed for archiving and sharing files. After uploading a file to a specialized Web site, you will be given a URL that you can share via e-mail, allowing your recipients to download the file at their convenience. Although these tools shouldn't be used for sensitive documents, they work well in most situations. For a list of tools to help you share large files, go to ***bedfordstmartins.com/alred*** and select *Digital Tips*, "Sharing Electronic Files."

Salutations, Closings, and Signature Blocks

An e-mail can function as a letter, memo, or personal note; therefore, you must adapt your salutation and complimentary closing to your **audience**. Unless your employer requires specific formats, use the following guidelines:

- When e-mail functions as a traditional letter, use the standard letter salutation (*Dear Ms. Tucker:* or *Dear Docuform Customer:*) and closing (*Sincerely,* or *Best wishes,*).
- When you send e-mail to individuals or small groups inside an organization, you may wish to adopt a more personal greeting (*Dear Andy,* or *Dear Project Colleagues,*).
- When e-mail functions as a personal note to a friend or close colleague, you can use an informal greeting or only a first name (*Hi Mike,* or *Hello Jenny,* or *Bill,*) and a closing (*Take care,* or *Best,*).

Be aware that, in some cultures, business correspondents do not use first names as freely as do American correspondents. See **international correspondence**.

Because e-mail does not provide letterhead with standard addresses and contact information, many companies and individual writers include signature blocks (also called *signatures*) at the bottom of their messages. Signature blocks, which writers can set to appear on every e-mail they send, supply information that company letterhead usually provides as well as appropriate links to Web sites. If your organization requires a certain format, adhere to that standard. The pattern shown in Figure E–1 is typical. For signature blocks, consider as well the following guidelines:

==========
Daniel J. Vasquez, Publications Manager ← Name and Title
Medical Information Systems ← Department or Division
MedTech Corporation ← Company Name
P.O. Box 5413 Salinas, CA 93962 ← Mailing Address
Off: 888-719-6620 Fax 888-719-5500 ← Phone and Fax
Web: www.medtech.com ← Web Address
==========

FIGURE E–1. E-mail Signature Block

- Keep line length to 60 characters or fewer to avoid unpredictable line wraps.
- Test your signature block in plain-text e-mail systems to verify your format.
- Use highlighting cues, such as **hyphens**, equal signs, and white space, to separate the signature from the message.
- Avoid using quotations, aphorisms, proverbs, or other sayings from popular culture, religion, or poetry in professional signatures.

WRITER'S CHECKLIST Managing Your E-mail and Reducing Overload

Given the high volume of e-mail in business, you need to manage your e-mail strategically.*

- ✔ Avoid becoming involved in an e-mail exchange if a phone call or meeting would be more efficient.
- ✔ Consider whether an e-mail message could prompt an unnecessary response from the recipient and make clear to the recipient whether you expect a response.
- ✔ Send a copy ("cc:") of an e-mail only when the person copied needs or wants the information.
- ✔ Review all messages on a subject before responding to avoid dealing with issues that are no longer relevant.

* For understanding the causes of e-mail overload, see Gail Fann Thomas and Cynthia L. King, "Reconceptualizing E-mail Overload," *Journal of Business and Technical Communication* 20, no. 3 (July 2006): 252–87.

WRITER'S CHECKLIST **Managing Your E-mail and Reducing Overload** (*continued*)

- ✔ Set priorities for reading e-mail by skimming sender names and subject lines as well as where you appear in a "cc:" address line.
- ✔ Check e-mail addresses before sending an e-mail and keep your addresses current.
- ✔ Check your in-box regularly and try to clear it by the end of each day.
- ✔ Create e-mail folders using key topics and personal names to file messages.
- ✔ Copy yourself or save sent copies of important e-mail messages in your folders.
- ✔ Use the search command to find particular subjects and personal names.
- ✔ Print copies of messages or attachments that you need for meetings, files, or similar purposes.

emphasis

Emphasis is the principle of stressing the most important ideas in your writing. You can achieve emphasis through one or more of the following techniques: position, climactic order, sentence length, sentence type, active **voice**, **repetition**, **intensifiers**, direct statements, long **dashes**, and typographical devices.

Achieving Emphasis

Position. Place the idea in a conspicuous position. The first and last words of a sentence, **paragraph**, or document stand out in readers' minds.

- Moon craters are important to understanding the earth's history because they reflect geological history.

The term *moon craters* is emphasized because it appears at the beginning of the sentence and *geological history* because it is at the end of the sentence. See also **subordination**.

Climactic Order. List the ideas or facts within a sentence in sequence from least to most important, as in the following example. See also **lists**.

- Discontinuation of the HGX212 line of circuit boards would cause some technicians to be relocated to other cities, some to be reclassified to a lower grade, and some to lose their jobs.

Sentence Length. Vary sentence length strategically. A short sentence that follows a long sentence or a series of long sentences stands out in the reader's mind, as in the short sentence ("We must cut costs.") that ends the following paragraph. See **sentence construction**.

- We have already reviewed the problem our manufacturing division has experienced during the past year. We could continue to examine the causes of our problems and point an accusing finger at all the culprits beyond our control, but in the end it all leads to one simple conclusion. We must cut costs.

Sentence Type. Vary sentences by the strategic use of a compound sentence, a complex sentence, or a simple sentence. See **sentence variety**.

- The report submitted by the committee was carefully illustrated, and it covered five pages of single-spaced copy.
  [This compound sentence carries no special emphasis; it contains two coordinate independent clauses.]
- The committee's report, which was carefully illustrated, covered five pages of single-spaced copy.
  [This complex sentence emphasizes the size of the report.]
- The carefully illustrated report submitted by the committee covered five pages of single-spaced copy.
  [This simple sentence emphasizes that the report was carefully illustrated.]

Active Voice. Use the active voice to emphasize the performer of an action: Make the performer the subject of the **verb**.

- Our department designed the new system.
  [This sentence emphasizes *our department*, which is the performer and the subject of the verb, *designed*.]

Repetition. Repeat key terms, as in the use of the word *remains* and the phrase *come and go* in the following sentence.

- Similarly, atoms *come and go* in a molecule, but the molecule *remains*; molecules *come and go* in a cell, but the cell *remains*; cells

> *come and go* in a body, but the body *remains*; persons *come and go* in an organization, but the organization *remains*.
>
> — Kenneth Boulding, *Beyond Economics*

Intensifiers. Although you can use intensifiers (*most*, *much*, *very*) for emphasis, this technique is so easily abused that it should be used with caution.

- The final proposal is *much* more persuasive than the first one. [The intensifier *much* emphasizes the contrast.]

Direct Statements. Use direct statements, such as "most important," "foremost," or someone's name in a **direct address**.

- Most important, keep in mind that everything you do affects the company's bottom line.
- John, I believe we should rethink our plans.

Long Dashes. Use a dash to call attention to a particular word or statement.

- The job will be done—after we are under contract.

Typographical Devices. Use *italics*, **bold type**, underlining, and CAPITAL LETTERS—but use them sparingly because overuse can create visual clutter and cause readers to ignore truly important information. See also **capitalization**, **italics**, and **layout and design**.

English as a second language

DIRECTORY

Count and Mass Nouns 172
Articles and Modifiers 172
Gerunds and Infinitives 173
Adjective Clauses 174
Present Perfect Verb Tense 174
Present Progressive Verb Tense 174
ESL Entries 175

Learning to write well in a second language takes a great deal of effort and practice. The most effective way to improve your command of written English is to read widely beyond the reports and professional articles your job requires, such as magazines, newspapers, articles,

novels, biographies, and any other writing that interests you. In addition, listen carefully to native speakers on television, on radio, and in person. Do not hesitate to consult a native speaker of English, especially for important writing tasks, such as **e-mails**, **memos**, and **reports**. Focus on those particular areas of English that give you trouble. This entry covers several areas often confusing to nonnative speakers and writers of English. See also **global communication**.

Count and Mass Nouns

Count nouns refer to things that can be counted (*tables*, *pencils*, *projects*, *employees*). *Mass nouns* (also called *noncount nouns*) identify things that cannot be counted (*electricity*, *air*, *loyalty*, *information*). This distinction can be confusing with words like *electricity* and *water*. Although we can count kilowatt-hours of electricity and bottles of water, counting becomes inappropriate when we use the words *electricity* and *water* in a general sense, as in "*Water* is an essential resource." Following is a list of typical mass **nouns**.

anger	education	money	technology
biology	equipment	news	transportation
business	furniture	oil	waste
clothing	health	precision	weather
coffee	honesty	research	work

The distinction between whether something can or cannot be counted determines the form of the noun to use (singular or plural), the kind of **article** that precedes it (*a*, *an*, *the*, or no article), and the kind of limiting **adjective** it requires (such as *fewer* or *less* and *much* or *many*). (See also **fewer / less**.) Notice that count and mass nouns are always common nouns, not proper nouns, such as the names of people.

Articles and Modifiers

The general rule is that every count noun must be preceded by an article (*a*, *an*, *the*), a demonstrative adjective (*this*, *that*, *these*, *those*), a possessive adjective (*my*, *your*, *her*, *his*, *its*, *their*), or some expression of quantity (such as *one*, *two*, *several*, *many*, *a few*, *a lot of*, *some*, *no*). The article, adjective, or expression of quantity appears either directly in front of the noun or in front of the whole noun phrase.

- Beth read *a* report last week. [article]
- *Those* reports Beth read were long. [demonstrative adjective]
- *Their* report was long. [possessive adjective]
- *Some* reports Beth read were long. [indefinite adjective]

The articles *a* and *an* are used with count nouns that refer to one item of the whole class of like items.

- Matthew has *a* pen.
  [Matthew could have any pen.]

The article *the* is used with nouns that refer to a specific item that both the reader and the writer can identify.

- Matthew has *the* pen.
  [Matthew has a specific pen that is known to both the reader and the writer.]

When making generalizations with count nouns, writers can either use *a* or *an* with a singular count noun or use no article with a plural count noun. Consider the following generalization using an article.

- *An* egg is a good source of protein.
  [any egg, all eggs, eggs in general]

However, the following generalization uses a plural count noun with no article.

- *Eggs* are good sources of protein.
  [any egg, all eggs, eggs in general]

When you are making a generalization with a mass noun, do not use an article in front of the mass noun.

- *Sugar* is bad for your teeth.

Gerunds and Infinitives

Nonnative writers of English are often puzzled by which form of a **verbal** (a **verb** used as another part of speech) to use when it functions as the direct object of a verb—or a **complement**. No structural rule exists for distinguishing between the use of an infinitive and a gerund as the object of a verb. Any specific verb may take an infinitive as its object, others may take a gerund, and yet others take either an infinitive or a gerund. At times, even the base form of the verb is used.

- He enjoys *working*. [gerund as a complement]
- She promised *to fulfill* her part of the contract. [infinitive as a complement]
- The president had the manager *assign* her staff to another project. [basic verb form as a complement]

To make such distinctions accurately, rely on what you hear native speakers use or what you read. You might also consult a reference book for ESL students.

Adjective Clauses

Because of the variety of ways adjective clauses are constructed in different languages, they can be particularly troublesome for nonnative writers of English. The following guidelines will help you form adjective clauses correctly.

Place an adjective clause directly after the noun it modifies.

- The tall woman who is standing across the room is a vice president of the company ~~who is standing across the room~~.

The adjective clause *who is standing across the room* modifies *woman*, not *company*, and thus comes directly after *woman*.

Avoid using a relative pronoun with another pronoun in an adjective clause.

- The man who ~~he~~ sits at that desk is my boss.

Present Perfect Verb Tense

In general, use the present perfect **tense** to refer to events completed in the past that have some implication for the present.

PRESENT PERFECT	She *has performed* the experiment three times. [She might perform it again.]

When a specific time is mentioned, however, use the simple past.

SIMPLE PAST	I *wrote* the letter yesterday morning. [The action, *wrote*, does not affect the present.]

Use the present perfect with a *since* or *for* phrase to describe actions that began in the past and continue in the present.

- This company *has been* in business *for* seventeen years.
- This company *has been* in business *since* 1990.

Present Progressive Verb Tense

The present progressive tense is especially difficult for those whose native language does not use this tense. The present progressive tense is used to describe some action or condition that is ongoing (or in progress) in the present and may continue into the future.

PRESENT PROGRESSIVE	I *am searching* for an error in the document. [The search is occurring now and may continue.]

In contrast, the simple present tense more often relates to habitual actions.

SIMPLE PRESENT	I *search* for errors in my documents. [I regularly search for errors, but I am not necessarily searching now.]

See ESL Tips for Using the Progressive Form in the entry **tense**.

ESL Entries

Most entries in this handbook may interest writers of English as a second language; however, the specific entries listed in the Contents by Topic under ESL Tips address issues that often cause problems.

WEB LINK	English as a Second Language
For Web sites and electronic grammar exercises intended for speakers of English as a second language, see ***bedfordstmartins.com/alred*** and select *Links for Handbook Entries* and *Exercise Central.*	

English, varieties of

Written English includes two broad categories: standard and nonstandard. Standard English is used in business, industry, government, education, and all professions. It has rigorous and precise criteria for capitalization, punctuation, spelling, and usage. Nonstandard English does not conform to such criteria; it is often regional in origin, or it reflects the special usages of a particular ethnic or social group. As a result, although nonstandard English may be vigorous and colorful, its usefulness as a means of communication is limited to certain contexts and to people already familiar and comfortable with it in those contexts. It rarely appears in printed material except for special effect. Nonstandard English is characterized by inexact or inconsistent **capitalization**, **punctuation**, **spelling**, diction, and **usage** choices.

Colloquial English

Colloquial English is spoken English or writing that uses words and expressions common to casual conversation. ("We need to get him up

to speed.") Colloquial English is appropriate to some kinds of writing (personal letters, notes, some **e-mail**) but not to most workplace writing.

Dialectal English

Dialectal English is a social or regional variety of the language that is comprehensible to people of that social group or region but may be incomprehensible to outsiders. Dialect, which is usually nonstandard English, involves distinct **word choice**, grammatical forms, and pronunciations. For example, residents of southern Louisiana who descended from French colonists speak a dialect often referred to as Cajun.

Localisms

A localism is a regional wording or phrasing. For example, a large sandwich on a long split roll is known in various regions of the United States as a *submarine*, *hero*, *hoagie*, *grinder*, *poor boy*, and *torpedo*. Such words normally should be avoided in workplace writing because not all readers will be familiar with the local meanings.

Slang

Slang is an informal vocabulary composed of **figures of speech** and colorful words used in humorous or extravagant ways. There is no objective test for slang, and many standard words are given slang applications. For instance, slang may be a familiar word used in a new way (*chill* meaning "relax") or it may be a new word (*wonk* meaning "someone who works or studies excessively").

Most slang is short-lived and has meaning only for a narrow **audience**. Sometimes, however, slang becomes standard because the word fills a legitimate need. *Skyscraper* and *date* (as in "go on a date"), for example, were once considered slang expressions. Nevertheless, although slang may be valid in informal and personal writing or fiction, it generally should be avoided in workplace writing. See also **jargon** and **technical writing style**.

environmental impact statements

Environmental impact statements (EISs) are documents that describe the anticipated environmental effects of large-scale construction projects, such as bridges, dams, roads, wind farms, power plants, and waste-disposal sites, before work begins. They report on both the types (such as ecological, economic, historic, and cultural) and magnitudes of the expected impacts. In addition to highlighting these probable effects,

EISs are required to describe alternatives to the proposed project, such as whether to locate a structure or site elsewhere or to take no action. See also **proposals**.

Background and Scope

Environmental impact statements are required by the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), which mandates that federal agencies evaluate the probable environmental effects of projects under their control. The NEPA established the Council on Environmental Quality, a board that set guidelines for EISs to assess the following:

- Direct and indirect environmental impact of the proposed project
- Interference with other activities (such as access or traffic)
- Energy and resource requirements
- Conservation and reparation potential
- Preservation of urban, historic, and cultural quality
- Ways to minimize damages

In addressing these topics, EISs are often multivolume documents that may cover such diverse topics as economics, geology, health physics, avian and wetland resources, protected species, noise and transportation impacts, air pollution, cultural and recreational resources, and many more, depending on the size and location of the proposed project.* Many U.S. cities and states also require EISs for planned projects under their jurisdiction that have probable environmental effects.

Audiences

Draft EISs must be available for public comment for a specified period (usually 60 days) before the final EIS is prepared and issued. During the comment period, many individuals and groups evaluate the draft and submit comments. These **audiences** include federal, state, and local officials; local populations near the proposed site of the project; legal experts; industry representatives; labor unions; Native American tribes (when affected); local and national environmental groups; and others. Each of these groups will include economic, legal, engineering, and biology experts, as well as members of the general public. The final EIS responds to comments made on the draft.

*For example, an Army Corps of Engineers Draft Environmental Impact Statement for a proposed wind farm off the coast of Massachusetts ran to 4,000 pages in four volumes. (U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Press Release No. MA-2004-105, 8 Nov. 2004.)

Writing Guidelines

Environmental impact statements are aimed at multiple readers because of the scope of material they address. They are organized into sections by the areas evaluated (such as air, water, soil, socioeconomics, and transportation), with each broad area further subdivided. Socioeconomics, for example, encompasses demography, the local economic base, local government finances, land use, community services, recreation, and more. Experts and other interested readers will focus on the areas of concern to them. To reach general readers, however, EISs also include an **executive summary** that provides an overview of the scope of the project, areas evaluated, areas of controversy, and issues to be resolved.

Given the diverse fields and backgrounds of EIS readers, writing the document in **plain language** is essential and is required by federal regulations. If you write a portion of an EIS as a subject expert, you cannot avoid the specialized terms and concepts in your field. However, strive to communicate in language that is clear and accurate. When you finish your draft, ask yourself if a friend or relative unfamiliar with your material could read and understand it. If you don't think so, revise it with that reader in mind. When you use essential technical terminology, either define it in the text or include it in a **glossary** of technical terms. And use consistent terminology, abbreviations, and units for measurements. If you use both metric and English units of measurement, ensure that they appear together consistently throughout: *5 kilometers (3 miles)*.

❖ ETHICS NOTE Members of the public have a vital interest in proposed activities that may affect their health and safety. They also have the right through the EIS process to comment on these activities before they are under way. The public cannot participate in this process, however, unless they can understand the EISs designed to inform them of potential effects. To promote public understanding, many states have created plain-language laws. These laws require that legal and other documents be written in clear, understandable language. The federal government also requires that all its new regulations be written in plain language. Keep these aims in mind as you draft material for EISs. ❖

Collaborative Guidelines

Given the size, scope, and areas of expertise necessary to develop EISs, collaboration among technical and legal specialists is essential. To bring order to a project of such magnitude, it's especially important that someone on the writing team review all drafts to ensure that the correct version is being circulated to the team for comment and to impose overall editorial uniformity and consistency. Otherwise, the wrong draft of

one or more sections may be inadvertently released to the public, or data in one section may not be expressed consistently with data in another section. See **collaborative writing**.

WEB LINK	Environmental Impact Statements

All EISs issued by federal agencies since 2004 are listed at *www.epa.gov/compliance/nepa/eisdata.html*. For a listing of all EISs issued by federal agencies since 1969, go to *www.library.northwestern.edu/transportation/searcheis.html*. Specific EISs at this site are available through interlibrary loan. The EISs for counties and municipalities are often available at their Web sites under environmental affairs, environmental protection, or a similar organization. For links to Web sites that contain samples of EISs, see ***bedfordstmartins.com/alred*** and select *Links for Handbook Entries*.

equal / unique / perfect

Logically, *equal* (meaning "having the same quantity or value as another"), *unique* (meaning "one of a kind"), and *perfect* (meaning "a state of highest excellence") are words with absolute meanings and therefore should not be compared. However, colloquial usage of *more* and *most* as **modifiers** of *equal*, *unique*, and *perfect* is so common that an absolute prohibition on such use is impossible.

- Our system is more unique [*or* more perfect] than theirs.

Some writers try to overcome the problem by using *more nearly* (*more nearly equal*, *more nearly unique*, *more nearly perfect*). When clarity and preciseness are critical, the use of comparative degrees with *equal*, *unique*, and *perfect* can be misleading. It is best to avoid using comparative degrees with absolute terms. See also **comparison**.

MISLEADING	Ours is a *more equal* percentage split than theirs.
PRECISE	Our percentage split is 51–49; theirs is 54–46.

etc.

Etc. is an abbreviation for the Latin *et cetera*, meaning "and others" or "and so on." Therefore, do not use the redundant phrase *and etc.*

Likewise, do not use *etc.* at the end of a series introduced by the phrases *such as* and *for example*—those phrases already indicate unnamed items of the same category. Use *etc.* with a logical progression and when at least two items are named. Do not italicize *etc.*

- The sorting machine processes coins (~~for example~~ pennies, nickels, ~~and~~ etc.), and then packages them for redistribution.

Otherwise, avoid *etc.* because the reader may not be able to infer what other items a list might include.

VAGUE He will bring note pads, paper clips, etc., to the trade show.

CLEAR He will bring note pads, paper clips, and other office supplies to the trade show.

ethics in writing

Ethics refers to the choices we make that affect others for good or ill. Ethical issues are inherent in writing and speaking because what we write and say can influence others. Further, how we express ideas affects our audience's perceptions of us and our organization's ethical stance. See also **audience**.

❖ ETHICS NOTE Obviously, no book can describe how to act ethically in every situation, but this entry describes some typical ethical lapses to watch for during **revision**.* In other entries throughout this book, ethical issues are highlighted using the symbols surrounding this paragraph. ❖

Avoid language that attempts to evade responsibility. Some writers use the passive **voice** because they hope to avoid responsibility or to obscure an issue: "It has been decided" (*Who* has decided?) or "Several mistakes were made" (*Who* made them?).

Avoid deceptive language. Do not use words with more than one meaning to circumvent the truth. Consider the company document that stated, "A nominal charge will be assessed for using our facilities." When clients objected that the charge was actually very high, the writer pointed out that the word *nominal* means "the named amount" as well as "very small." In that situation, clients had a strong case in charging that the

*Adapted from Brenda R. Sims, "Linking Ethics and Language in the Technical Communication Classroom," *Technical Communication Quarterly* 2, no. 3 (Summer 1993): 285–99.

company was attempting to be deceptive. Various **abstract words**, technical and legal **jargon**, and **euphemisms** are unethical when they are used to mislead readers or to hide a serious or dangerous situation, even though technical or legal experts could interpret those words and terms as accurate. See also **word choice**.

Do not de-emphasize or suppress important information. Not including information that a reader would want to have, such as potential safety hazards or hidden costs for which a customer might be responsible, is unethical and possibly illegal. Likewise, do not hide information in dense paragraphs of **gobbledygook** with small type and little white space, as is common in credit-card contracts. Use **layout and design** features such as type size, bullets, **lists**, and footnotes to highlight information that is important to readers.

Do not mislead with partial or self-serving information. For example, avoid the temptation to highlight a feature or service that readers would find attractive but that is available only with some product models or at extra cost. (See also **logic errors** and **positive writing**.) Readers could justifiably object that you have given them a false impression to sell them a product or service, especially if you also deemphasize the extra cost or other special conditions.

In general, treat others—individuals, companies, groups—with fairness and with respect. Avoid language that is biased, racist, or sexist or that perpetuates stereotypes. See also **biased language**.

In technical writing, guard against reporting false, fabricated, or plagiarized research and test results. As an author, a technical reviewer, or an editor, your ethical obligation is to correct or point out any misrepresentations of fact before publication, whether the publication is a **trade journal article**, **test report**, or product handbook. (See also **laboratory reports**.) The stakes of such ethical oversights are high because of the potential risk to the health and safety of others. Those at risk can include unwary consumers and workers injured because of faulty products or unprotected exposure to toxic materials.

Finally, be aware that both **plagiarism** and violations of **copyright** not only are unethical but also can have serious professional and legal consequences for you in the classroom and on the job.

WRITER'S CHECKLIST **Writing Ethically**

Ask yourself the following questions:

✔ *Am I willing to take responsibility, publicly and privately, for what I have written?* Make sure you can stand behind what you have written.

(*continued*)

WRITER'S CHECKLIST **Writing Ethically** (*continued*)

- ✔ *Is the document or message honest and truthful?* Scrutinize findings and conclusions carefully. Make sure that the data support them.
- ✔ *Am I acting in my employer's, my client's, the public's, or my own best long-term interest?* Have an impartial and appropriate outsider review and comment on what you have written.
- ✔ *Does the document or message violate anyone's rights?* If information is confidential and you have serious concerns, consider a review by the company's legal staff or an attorney.
- ✔ *Am I ethically consistent in my writing?* Apply consistently the principles outlined here and those you have assimilated throughout your life to meet this standard.
- ✔ *What if everybody acted or communicated in this way?* If you were the intended reader, consider whether the message would be acceptable and respectful.

If the answers to these questions do not come easily, consider asking a trusted colleague to review and comment on what you have written.

WEB LINK **Professional Codes of Ethics**

Professional groups often create ethical codes of conduct for their members. One example is the National Society of Professional Engineers (NSPE), which represents individual engineering professionals and licensed engineers. For links to the NSPE's code as well as codes of ethics for other fields, see ***bedfordstmartins.com/alred*** and select *Links for Handbook Entries*.

euphemisms

A euphemism is an inoffensive substitute for a word or phrase that could be distasteful, offensive, or too blunt: *passed away* for *died*; *previously owned* or *preowned* for *used*; *lay off* or *restructure* for *fire* or *terminate* employees. Used judiciously, euphemisms can help you avoid embarrassing or offending someone.

❖ ETHICS NOTE Euphemisms can also hide the facts of a situation (*incident* or *event* for *accident*) or be a form of **affectation** if used carelessly.

Avoid them especially in **international correspondence** and other forms of **global communication** where their meanings could be not only confusing but also misleading. See also **ethics in writing**. ❖

everybody / everyone

Both *everybody* and *everyone* are usually considered singular and take singular **verbs** and **pronouns**.

- *Everyone* here *leaves* at 4:30 p.m.
- *Everybody* at the meeting presented *his or her* individual assessment.

However, the meaning can be obviously plural.

- *Everyone* thought the plan should be rejected, and I really couldn't blame *them*.

Although normally written as one word, write it as two words if you wish to emphasize each individual in a group. ("*Every one* of the team members contributed to this discovery.") See also **agreement**.

exclamation marks

The exclamation mark (!) indicates strong feeling, urgency, elation, or surprise ("Hurry!" "Great!" "Wow!"). (See also **interjections**.) However, it cannot make an argument more convincing, lend force to a weak statement, or call attention to an intended irony.

An exclamation mark can be used after a whole sentence or an element of a sentence.

- This meeting—please note it well!—concerns our budget deficit.

When used with **quotation marks**, the exclamation mark goes outside, unless what is quoted is an exclamation.

- The paramedic shouted, "Don't touch the victim!" The bystander then, according to a witness, "jumped like a kangaroo"!

In **instructions** and **manuals**, the exclamation mark is often used in text and **visuals** for cautions and warnings ("Danger!" ⚠). See also **emphasis**.

executive summaries

An executive summary consolidates the principal points of a **formal report** or other long document. Executive summaries differ from **abstracts** in that **readers** scan abstracts to decide whether to read the work in full. However, an executive summary may be the only section of a longer work read by many readers, so it must accurately and concisely represent the original document. It should restate the document's **purpose**, **scope**, methods, findings, **conclusions**, and recommendations, as well as summarize how results were obtained or the reasons for the recommendations. Executive summaries tend to be about 10 percent of the length of the documents they summarize and generally follow the same sequence.

Write the executive summary so that it can be read independently of the report or proposal. Executive summaries may occasionally include a figure, table, or footnote—if that information is essential to the summary. However, do not refer by number to figures, tables, or references contained elsewhere in the document. See Figure F–5 (pages 208–9), which is an executive summary of a report on the disposition of ethics cases in an aircraft corporation.

WRITER'S CHECKLIST **Writing Executive Summaries**

- ✔ Write the executive summary after you have completed the original document.
- ✔ Avoid or define terminology that may not be familiar to your intended **audience**.
- ✔ Spell out all uncommon symbols and **abbreviations**.
- ✔ Make the summary concise, but do not omit transitional words and phrases (*however, moreover, therefore, for example, next*).
- ✔ Include only information discussed in the original document.
- ✔ Place the executive summary at the very beginning of the body of the report, as described in **formal reports**.

expletives

An expletive is a word that fills the position of another word, phrase, or clause. *It* and *there* are common expletives.

- *It* is certain that this fuel pump will fail at high pressures.

In the example, the expletive *it* occupies the position of subject in place of the real subject, *that this fuel pump will fail at high pressures*. Expletives are sometimes necessary to avoid **awkwardness**, but they are commonly overused, and most sentences can be better stated without them.

- *Many* *were*
  ~~There were many~~ files lost when we converted to the new server.

In addition to its grammatical use, the word *expletive* means a profane exclamation or oath.

explicit / implicit

An *explicit* statement is one expressed directly, with precision and clarity.

- He gave us *explicit* directions to the Wausau facility.

An *implicit* meaning is one that is not directly expressed.

- Although the CEO did not mention the lawsuit directly, the company's commitment to ethical practices was *implicit* in her speech.

exposition

Exposition, or *expository writing*, informs **readers** by presenting facts and ideas in direct and concise language; it usually relies less on colorful or figurative language than writing meant to be expressive or persuasive. Expository writing attempts to explain to readers what the subject is, how it works, and how it relates to something else. Exposition is aimed at the readers' understanding rather than at their imagination or emotions; it is a sharing of the writer's knowledge. Exposition aims to provide accurate, complete information and to analyze it for the readers. See also **audience**.

Because it is the most effective form of discourse for explaining difficult subjects, exposition is widely used in **reports**, **memos**, and other types of technical writing. To use exposition effectively, you must have a thorough knowledge of your subject. As with all writing, how much of that knowledge you convey depends on the reader's needs and your **purpose**.

F

fact

Expressions containing the word *fact* ("due to the *fact* that," "except for the *fact* that," "as a matter of *fact*," or "because of the *fact* that") are often wordy substitutes for more accurate terms.

Because
- ~~Due to the fact that~~ the technical staff has a high turnover rate, our training program has suffered.

Do not use the word *fact* to refer to matters of judgment or opinion.

In my opinion,
- ~~It is a fact that~~ our research has improved because we now have a capable technical staff.

The word *fact* is, of course, valid when facts are what is meant.

- Our tests uncovered numerous facts to support your conclusion.

See also **conciseness** and **logic errors**.

FAQs (Frequently Asked Questions)

An FAQ is a **list** of questions, paired with their answers, that readers will likely ask about products, services, or other information presented on a Web site or in customer-oriented documents. By presenting commonly sought information in one place, FAQs save readers from searching through an entire Web site or document to find what they need.

A good FAQ list can help create a positive impression with customers or clients because the writer is acknowledging that their time is valuable. An FAQ list also helps a company spend less time answering phone calls and **e-mail** questions by anticipating customer needs and providing important information in a simple, a logical, and an organized format. However, an FAQ list is not a substitute for solving problems with a product or service.

❖ ETHICS NOTE If customers are experiencing numerous problems because of a product design or programming flaw, you need to work with your company's product developers to correct the problem rather than try to avoid addressing the problem by hiding within an FAQ. ❖

Questions to Include

Develop the list of questions and their answers by **brainstorming** with colleagues who regularly are in contact with customers. If customers frequently ask about company stock information and request **annual reports**, for example, your FAQ list could include the question "How do I obtain a copy of your latest annual report?" This question can be followed with a brief answer that includes the Web address where the annual report can be downloaded or the name, phone number, and e-mail address of the person who distributes the annual reports. See also **writing for the Web**.

Organization

Organize the list so that readers can find the information they need quickly and easily. List your questions in decreasing **order of importance** for your readers so that they can obtain the most important information first. If you have a number of questions that are related to a specific topic, such as investor relations, product returns, or completing forms, group them into categories and identify each category with a heading, such as "Investor Relations," "Shipping," and "Forms." You may also want to create a **table of contents** at the top of the FAQ page so that readers can quickly find the topics relevant to their interests.

Study other FAQs for products or services similar to yours. Analyze these FAQs to help you in your approach and organization: Can you find answers quickly, or do you need to scroll through many pages to find them? Are the questions with their answers separated into logical categories or listed in random order? Is it easy to differentiate the question from the answer? Do the answers provide too little or too much information?*

Placement

The location of your FAQ list should enable readers to find answers quickly. For Web sites, an FAQ page is usually linked from the homepage either in a directory or with a text link for easy access. In small printed documents, such as **brochures**, FAQs are usually highlighted and placed after the standard information in the body of the document.

*For examples of FAQs, search with QueryCAT at *www.querycat.com*, which offers the "largest database of frequently asked questions."

WRITER'S CHECKLIST **Developing an FAQ**

- ✔ *Focus on your reader*. Write your questions and answers from a "you" viewpoint and with a positive, conversational tone.
- ✔ *Separate long FAQ lists*. Group related questions under topic headings. For long online FAQs, consider listing only questions with links to separate pages, each containing an individual question and answer.
- ✔ *Distinguish questions from answers*. Use boldface for questions and use white space to separate questions from answers. Use sparingly multiple colors, italics, or other formatting styles that can make the list difficult to read.
- ✔ *Keep questions and answers concise*. If a question has a long answer, add a link to a separate Web page or refer to an appropriate page number in a printed document.
- ✔ *Keep the list updated*. Review and update FAQs at least monthly — or more frequently if your content changes often.
- ✔ *Give readers the opportunity to weigh in*. Provide an e-mail link for existing and possible customers to submit questions they would like to see added to the FAQ list.

fax (*see* selecting the medium)

feasibility reports

When organizations consider a new project — developing a new product or service, expanding a customer base, purchasing equipment, or moving operations — they first try to determine the project's chances for success. A feasibility report presents evidence about the practicality of a proposed project based on specific criteria. It answers such questions as the following: Is new construction or development necessary? Is sufficient staff available? What are the costs? Is funding available? What are the legal ramifications? Based on the findings of this analysis, the report offers logical conclusions and recommends whether the project should be carried out. When feasibility reports stress specific steps that should be taken as a result of a study of a problem or an issue, they are often referred to as *recommendation reports*. In the condensed feasibility report shown in Figure F–1, a consultant conducts a study to determine how to upgrade a company's computer system and Internet capability.

Before beginning to write a feasibility report, analyze the needs of the **audience** as well as the **context** and **purpose** of the study. Then write a purpose statement, such as "The purpose of this study is to determine the feasibility of expanding our Pacific Rim operations," to guide you or a collaborative team. See also **brainstorming** and **collaborative writing**.

Introduction
The purpose of this report is to determine which of two proposed options would best enable Darnell Business Forms Corporation to upgrade its file servers and its Internet capacity to meet its increasing data and communication needs. . . .

Background. In October 2010, the Information Development Group put the MACRON System into operation. Since then, the volume of processing transactions has increased fivefold (from 1,000 to 5,000 updates per day). This increase has severely impaired system response time; in fact, average response time has increased from 10 seconds to 120 seconds. Further, our new Web-based client-services system has increased exponentially the demand for processing speed and access capacity.

Scope. We have investigated two alternative solutions to provide increased processing capacity: (1) purchase of an additional Aurora processor to supplement the one in operation, and (2) purchase of an Icardo 60 with expandable peripherals to replace the Aurora processor currently in operation. The two alternatives are evaluated here, according to both cost and expanded capacity for future operations.

Additional Aurora Processor
Purchasing a second Aurora processor would require increased annual maintenance costs, salary for a second computer specialist, increased energy costs, and a one-time construction cost for necessary remodeling and installing Internet connections.

Annual maintenance costs	$35,000
Annual costs for computer specialist	75,000
Annual increased energy costs	7,500
Total annual operating costs	$117,500
Construction cost (one-time)	50,000
Total first-year costs	$167,500

The installation and operation of another Aurora processor are expected to produce savings in system reliability and readiness.

FIGURE F–1. Feasibility Report (*continued*)

F

System Reliability. An additional Aurora would reduce current downtime periods from four to two per week. Downtime recovery averages 30 minutes and affects 40 users. Assuming that 50 percent of users require system access at a given time, we determined that the following reliability savings would result:

2 downtimes 0.5 hours 40 users 50% $50/hour overtime
52 weeks = $52,000 annual savings.

[*The feasibility report would also discuss the second option—purchase of the Icardo 60 and its long-term savings.*]

Conclusion
A comparison of costs for both systems indicates that the Icardo 60 would cost $2,200 more in first-year costs.

	Aurora	Icardo 60
Net additional operating costs	$56,300	$84,000
One-time construction costs	50,000	24,500
First-year total	$106,300	$108,500

Installation of an additional Aurora processor would permit the present information-processing systems to operate relatively smoothly and efficiently. It would not, however, provide the expanded processing capacity that the Icardo 60 processor would for implementing new subsystems required to increase processing speed and Internet access.

Recommendation
The Icardo 60 processor should be purchased because of the long-term savings and because its additional capacity and flexibility will allow for greater expansion in the future.

3

FIGURE F–1. Feasibility Report (*continued*)

Report Sections

Every feasibility report should contain an **introduction**, a body, a **conclusion**, and a recommendation. See also **proposals** and **formal reports**.

Introduction. The introduction states the purpose of the report, describes the circumstances that led to the report, and includes any per-

tinent background information. It may also discuss the **scope** of the report, any procedures or methods used in the analysis of alternatives, and any limitations of the study.

Body. The body of the report presents a detailed review of the alternatives for achieving the goals of the project. Examine each option according to specific criteria, such as cost and financing, availability of staff, and other relevant requirements, identifying the subsections with **headings** to guide readers.

Conclusion. The conclusion interprets the available options and leads to one option as the best or most feasible.

Recommendation. The recommendation section clearly presents the writer's (or team's) opinion on which alternative best meets the criteria as summarized in the conclusion.

WEB LINK	Feasibility Reports
For links to full feasibility reports, see ***bedfordstmartins.com/alred*** and select *Links for Handbook Entries*.	

female / male

The terms *female* and *male* are usually restricted to scientific, legal, and medical contexts (a *female* suspect, a *male* patient). Keep in mind that the terms sound cold and impersonal. *Girl*, *woman*, and *lady* or *boy*, *man*, and *gentleman* may be acceptable substitutes in other **contexts**, but be sensitive to their connotations involving age, dignity, and social position. See also **biased language** and **connotation / denotation**.

few / a few

In certain contexts, *few* carries more negative overtones than does the phrase *a few*.

NEGATIVE The report offers *few* helpful ideas.
POSITIVE The report offers *a few* helpful ideas.

fewer / less

Fewer refers to items that can be counted (count **nouns**). ("*Fewer* employees retired than we expected.") *Less* refers to mass quantities or amounts (mass nouns). ("We had *less* rain this year than forecasts predicted.") See also **English as a second language**.

figuratively / literally

Literally means "actually" and is often confused with *figuratively*, which means "metaphorically." To say that someone "*literally* turned green with envy" would mean that the person actually changed color.

- In the winner's circle the jockey was, *figuratively* speaking, ten feet tall.
- When he said, "Let's bury our competitors," he did not mean it *literally*.

Avoid the use of *literally* to reinforce the importance of something.

- She was ~~literally~~ the best of the applicants.

See also **intensifiers**.

figures of speech

A figure of speech is an imaginative expression that often compares two things that are basically not alike but have at least one thing in common. For example, if a device is cone-shaped and has an opening at the narrow end, you might say that it looks like a volcano.

Figures of speech can clarify the unfamiliar by relating a new concept to one with which readers are familiar. In that respect, they help establish understanding between the specialist and the nonspecialist. (See **audience**.) Figures of speech can help translate the abstract into the concrete; in the process of doing so, they can also make writing more colorful and graphic. (See also **abstract / concrete words**.) A figure of speech must make sense, however, to achieve the desired effect.

ILLOGICAL Without the fuel of tax incentives, our economic engine would operate less efficiently.
[An engine would not operate at all without fuel.]

Figures of speech also must be consistent to be effective.

- We must get our research program *back on course*, and we are counting on you to ~~carry the ball.~~ steer the effort.

A figure of speech should not overshadow the point the writer is trying to make. In addition, it is better to use no figure of speech at all than to use a trite one. A surprise that comes "like a bolt out of the blue" seems stale and not much of a surprise. See also **clichés**.

Types of Figures of Speech

Analogies are comparisons that show the ways in which two objects or concepts are similar, often used to make one of them easier to understand. The following example explains a computer search technique by comparing it to the use of keywords in a dictionary.

- The search technique used in *indexed sequential processing* is similar to a search technique you might use to find the page on which a particular word is located in a dictionary. You might scan the keywords located at the top of each dictionary page that identify the first and last words on each page until you find the keywords that encompass the word you seek. Indexed sequential processing works the same way with computer files.

Hyperboles are gross exaggerations used to achieve an effect or **emphasis**.

- We were dead after working all night on the grant proposal.

Litotes are understatements, for emphasis or effect, achieved by denying the opposite of the point you are making.

- Over 1,600 pages is no small size for a book.

Metaphors are figures of speech that point out similarities between two things by treating them as though they were the same thing.

- The astronaut's *umbilical cord* carries life-sustaining oxygen for space-walking.

Metonyms are figures of speech that use one aspect of a thing to represent it, such as *the blue* for the sky and *wheels* for a car.

- The economist predicted a decrease in *hard-hat* jobs.

Personification is a figure of speech that attributes human characteristics to nonhuman things or abstract ideas. We might refer, for example, to the *birth* of a planet or apply emotions to machines.

- She said that she was frustrated with the *stubborn* security system.

Similes are direct comparisons of two essentially unlike things, linking them with the word *like* or *as*.

- Reconstructing the plane's fuselage following the accident was *like piecing together a jigsaw puzzle*.

Avoid figures of speech in **global communication** and **international correspondence** because people in other cultures may translate figures of speech literally and be confused by their meanings.

fine

When used in expressions such as "I feel *fine*" or "a *fine* day," *fine* is colloquial and, like the word *nice*, is often too vague for technical writing. Use the word *fine* to mean "refined," "delicate," or "pure."

- A *fine* film of oil covered the surface of the water.
- *Fine* crystal is made in Austria.
- The Court made a *fine* distinction between the two statutes.

first / firstly

First and *firstly* are both adverbs. Avoid *firstly* in favor of *first*, which sounds less stiff than *firstly*. The same is true of other ordinal **numbers**, such as *second*, *third*, and so on.

flammable / inflammable / nonflammable

Both *flammable* and *inflammable* mean "capable of being set on fire." Because the *in-* **prefix** usually causes the base word to take its opposite meaning (*incapable*, *incompetent*), use *flammable* instead of *inflammable* to avoid possible misunderstanding. ("The cargo of gasoline is *flammable*.") *Nonflammable* is the opposite, meaning "not capable of being set on fire." ("The asbestos suit was *nonflammable*.")

flowcharts

A flowchart is a diagram using symbols, words, or pictures to show the stages of a process in sequence from beginning to end. A flowchart provides an overview of a process and allows the **reader** to identify its essential steps quickly and easily. Flowcharts can take several forms. The steps might be represented by labeled blocks, as shown in Figure F–2; pictorial symbols, as shown in Figure F–3; or ISO (International Organization for Standardization) symbols, as shown in Figure F–4.

WRITER'S CHECKLIST **Creating Flowcharts** (*continued on page 197*)

- ✔ Label each step in the process or identify each step with labeled blocks, pictorial representations, or standardized symbols.
- ✔ Follow the standard flow directions: left to right and top to bottom. Indicate any nonstandard flow directions with arrows.
- ✔ Include a key (or call-outs) if the flowchart contains symbols your **audience** may not understand.

(*continued*)

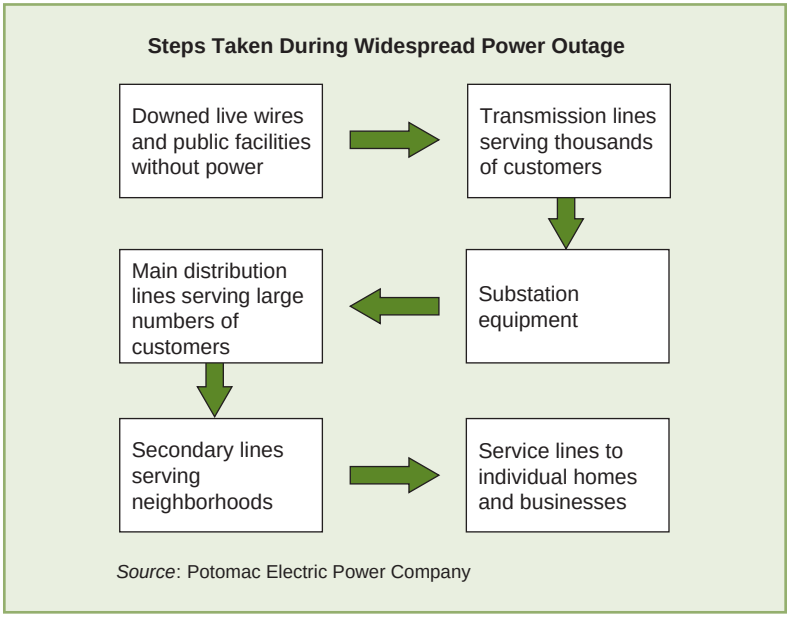

Steps Taken During Widespread Power Outage
Downed live wires and public facilities without power
Transmission lines serving thousands of customers
Substation equipment
Main distribution lines serving large numbers of customers
Secondary lines serving neighborhoods
Service lines to individual homes and businesses
Source: Potomac Electric Power Company

FIGURE F–2. Flowchart Using Labeled Blocks (Depicting Electric Utility Power Restoration Process)

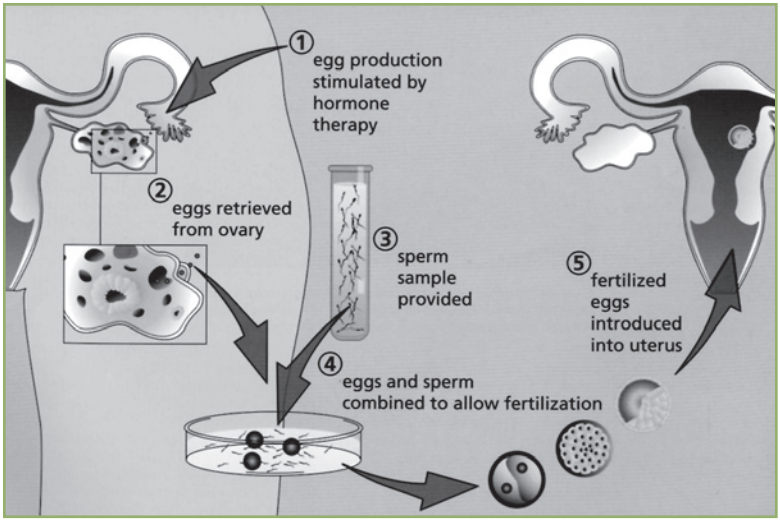


FIGURE F–3. Flowchart Using Pictorial Symbols. *Source*: FDA Consumer, Nov.–Dec. 2004. U.S. Food and Drug Administration.

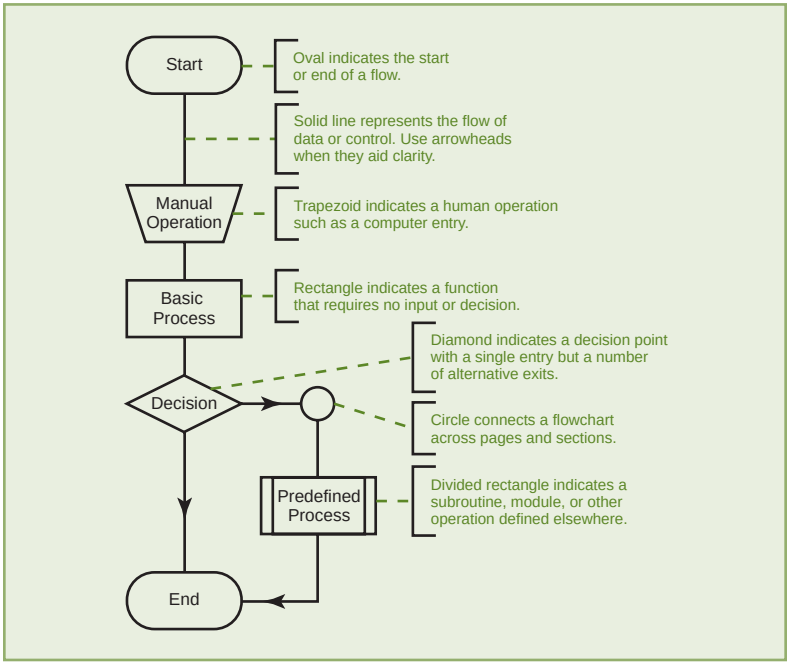

Start
Oval indicates the start or end of a flow.
Solid line represents the flow of data or control. Use arrowheads when they aid clarity.
Manual Operation
Trapezoid indicates a human operation such as a computer entry.
Basic Process
Rectangle indicates a function that requires no input or decision.
Diamond indicates a decision point with a single entry but a number of alternative exits.
Decision
Circle connects a flowchart across pages and sections.
Predefined Process
Divided rectangle indicates a subroutine, module, or other operation defined elsewhere.
End

FIGURE F–4. Common ISO Flowchart Symbols (with Annotations)

WRITER'S CHECKLIST **Creating Flowcharts** (*continued*)

- ✔ Use standardized symbols for flowcharts that document computer programs and other information-processing procedures, as detailed in *Information Processing — Documentation Symbols and Conventions for Data, Program and System Flowcharts, Program Network Charts, and System Resources Charts*, ISO 5807-1985 (E).

For advice on integrating flowcharts into your text, see **visuals**. See also **global graphics**.

footnotes (*see* documenting sources)

forceful / forcible

Although *forceful* and *forcible* are both **adjectives** meaning "characterized by or full of force," *forceful* is usually limited to persuasive ability and *forcible* to physical force.

- John made a *forceful* presentation at the committee meeting.
- Firefighters must often make *forcible* entries into buildings.

foreign words in English

The English language has a long history of borrowing words from other languages. Most borrowing occurred so long ago that we seldom recognize the borrowed terms (also called *loan words*) as being of foreign origin (*kindergarten* from German, *animal* from Latin, *church* from Greek).

Words not likely to be familiar to **readers** or not fully assimilated into the English language are set in **italics** (*sine qua non*, *coup de grâce*, *in res*, *in camera*). Most dictionaries offer guidance, although you should also be guided by the **context**. Even when foreign words have been fully assimilated, they often retain their diacritical marks (*cliché*, *résumé*, *vis-à-vis*). As foreign words are absorbed into English, their plural forms give way to English plurals (*agenda* becomes *agendas* and *formulae* becomes *formulas*).

Generally, foreign expressions should be used only if they serve a real need. (See also **e.g. / i.e.** and **etc.**) The overuse of foreign words in

an attempt to impress your reader or achieve elegance is **affectation**. Effective communication can be accomplished only if your readers understand what you write. So choose foreign expressions only when they make an idea clearer or when there is no English substitute (Tsunami for "an unusually large sea wave caused by an undersea quake or volcanic eruption").

F

foreword / forward

Although the pronunciation is the same, the spellings and meanings of these two words are quite different. The word *foreword* is a **noun** meaning "introductory statement at the beginning of a book or other work."

- The director wrote a *foreword* for the report.

The word *forward* is an **adjective** or **adverb** meaning "at or toward the front."

- Sliding the throttle to the *forward* position [adjective] will cause the boat to move *forward*. [adverb]

formal reports

Formal reports are usually written accounts of major projects that require substantial **research**, and they often involve more than one writer. See also **collaborative writing**.

Most formal reports are divided into three primary parts—front matter, body, and back matter—each of which contains a number of elements. The number and arrangement of the elements may vary depending on the subject, the length of the report, and the kinds of material covered. Many organizations have a preferred style for formal reports and furnish guidelines for report writers to follow. If you are not required to follow a specific style, use the **format** recommended in this entry. The following list includes most of the elements a formal report might contain, in the order they typically appear. (The items shown with page numbers appear in the sample formal report on pages 204–20.) Often, a **cover letter** or **memo** precedes the front matter and identifies the report by title, the person or persons to whom it is sent, the reason it was written, the **scope**, and any information that the **audience** considers important, as shown on page 204.

FRONT MATTER
Title Page (205)
Abstract (206)
Table of Contents (207)
List of Figures
List of Tables
Foreword
Preface
List of Abbreviations and Symbols

BODY
Executive summary (208)
Introduction (210)
Text (including headings) (213)
Conclusions (218)
Recommendations (218)
Explanatory Notes
References (or Works Cited) (220)

BACK MATTER
Appendixes
Bibliography
Glossary
Index

DIGITAL TIP

Creating Styles and Templates

Most word-processing programs enable you to create templates that automate the visual appearance of text elements such as headings, paragraphs, and lists throughout a document. Once you specify your styles, save the template and use it each time you create a formal report. For step-by-step instructions, see ***bedfordstmartins.com/alred*** and select *Digital Tips*, "Creating Styles and Templates."

Front Matter

The front matter serves several functions: It explains the writer's **purpose**, describes the scope and type of information in the report, and lists where specific information is covered in the report. Not all formal reports include every element of front matter described here. A title page and table of contents are usually mandatory, but the scope of the report

and its **context** as well as the intended audience determine whether the other elements are included.

Title Page. Although the formats of title pages may vary, they often include the following items:

- *The full title of the report*. The title describes the topic, scope, and purpose of the report, as discussed in **titles**.
- *The name of the writer(s), principal investigator(s), or compiler(s)*. Sometimes contributors identify themselves by their job title in the organization or by their tasks in contributing to the report (*Olivia Jones, Principal Investigator*).
- *The date or dates of the report*. For one-time reports, the date shown is the date the report is distributed. For reports issued periodically (monthly, quarterly, or yearly), the subtitle shows the period that the report covers and the distribution date is shown elsewhere on the title page, as shown in Figure F–5 on page 205.
- *The name of the organization for which the writer(s) works*.
- *The name of the organization to which the report is being submitted*. This information is included if the report is written for a customer or client.

The title page should not be numbered, as in the example on page 205, but it is considered page i. The back of the title page, which is left blank and unnumbered, is considered page ii, and the abstract falls on page iii. The body of the report begins with Arabic number 1, and a new chapter or large section typically begins on a new right-hand (odd-numbered) page. Reports with printing on only one side of each sheet can be numbered consecutively regardless of where new sections begin. Center page numbers at the bottom of each page throughout the report.

Abstract. An **abstract**, which normally follows the title page, highlights the major points of the report, as shown on page 206, enabling readers to decide whether to read the report.

Table of Contents. A **table of contents** lists all the major sections or **headings** of the report in their order of appearance, as shown on page 207, along with their page numbers.

List of Figures. All **visuals** contained in the report—**drawings**, **photographs**, **maps**, charts, and **graphs**—are labeled as figures. When a report contains more than five figures, list them, along with their page numbers, in a separate section, beginning on a new page immediately

following the table of contents. Number figures consecutively with Arabic numbers.

List of Tables. When a report contains more than five **tables**, list them, along with their titles and page numbers, in a separate section immediately following the list of figures (if there is one). Number tables consecutively with Arabic numbers.

Foreword. A foreword is an optional introductory statement about a formal report or publication that is written by someone other than the author(s). The foreword author is usually an authority in the field or an executive of the organization sponsoring the report. That author's name and affiliation appear at the end of the foreword, along with the date it was written. The foreword generally provides background information about the publication's significance and places it in the context of other works in the field. The foreword precedes the preface when a work has both.

Preface. The preface, another type of optional introductory statement, is written by the author(s) of the formal report. It may announce the work's purpose, scope, and context (including any special circumstances leading to the work). A preface may also specify the audience for a work, contain acknowledgments of those who helped in its preparation, and cite permission obtained for the use of copyrighted works. See also **copyright**.

List of Abbreviations and Symbols. When the report uses numerous **abbreviations** and symbols that readers may not be able to interpret, the front matter may include a section that lists symbols and abbreviations with their meanings.

Body

The body is the section of the report that provides context for the report, describes in detail the methods and procedures used to generate the report, demonstrates how results were obtained, describes the results, draws conclusions, and, if appropriate, makes recommendations.

Executive Summary. The body of the report begins with the **executive summary**, which provides a more complete overview of the report than an abstract does. See an example on pages 208–9 and review the entry cross-referenced above.

Introduction. The **introduction** gives readers any general information, such as the report's purpose, scope, and context necessary to

understand the detailed information in the rest of the report (see pages 210–12).

Text. The text of the body presents, as appropriate, the details of how the topic was investigated, how a problem was solved, what alternatives were explored, and how the best choice among them was selected. This information is enhanced by the use of visuals, tables, and references that both clarify the text and persuade the reader. See also **persuasion**.

Conclusions. The **conclusions** section pulls together the results of the research and interprets the findings of the report, as shown on pages 218–19.

Recommendations. Recommendations, which are sometimes combined with the conclusions, state what course of action should be taken based on the earlier arguments and conclusions of the study, as are shown on pages 218–19.

Explanatory Notes. Occasionally, reports contain notes that amplify terms or points for some readers that might be a distraction for others. If such notes are not included as footnotes on the page where the term or point appears, they may appear in a "Notes" section at the end of the report.

References (or Works Cited). A list of references or works cited appears in a separate section if the report refers to or quotes directly from printed or online research sources. If your employer has a preferred reference style, follow it; otherwise, use one of the guidelines provided in the entry **documenting sources**. For a relatively short report, place a reference or works-cited section at the end of the body of the report, as shown on page 220. For a report with a number of sections or chapters, place a reference or works-cited section at the end of each major section or chapter. In either case, title the reference or works-cited section as such and begin it on a new page. If a particular reference appears in more than one section or chapter, repeat it in full in each appropriate reference section.

❖ ETHICS NOTE Always identify the sources of any facts, ideas, **quotations**, and paraphrases you include in a report. Even if unintentional, **plagiarism** is unethical and may result in formal academic misconduct charges in a college course. On the job, it can result in legal action or even dismissal. ❖

Back Matter

The back matter of a formal report contains supplementary material, such as where to find additional information about the topic (bibliography), and expands on certain subjects (appendixes). Other back-matter elements define special terms (glossary) and provide information on how to easily locate information in the report (index). For very large formal reports, back-matter sections may be individually numbered (Appendix A, Appendix B).

Appendixes. An **appendix** clarifies or supplements the report with information that is too detailed or lengthy for the primary audience but is relevant to secondary audiences.

Bibliography. A **bibliography** lists alphabetically all the sources that were consulted to prepare the report—not just those cited—and suggests additional resources that readers might want to consult.

Glossary. A **glossary** is an alphabetical list of specialized terms used in the report and their definitions.

Index. An index is an alphabetical list of all the major topics and subtopics discussed in the report. It cites the page numbers where discussion of each topic can be found and allows readers to find information on topics quickly and easily. The index is always the final section of a report. See also **indexing**.

Sample Formal Report

Figure F–5 shows the typical sections of a formal report. Keep in mind that the number and arrangement of the elements vary, depending on the context, especially the requirements of an organization or a client.

F

CGF Aircraft Corporation Memo

To: Members of the Ethics and Business Conduct Committee
From: Susan Litzinger, Director of Ethics and Business Conduct SL
Date: March 5, 2012
Subject: Reported Ethics Cases, 2011

Identifies topic

Enclosed is "Reported Ethics Cases: Annual Report, 2011." This report, required by CGF Policy CGF-EP-01, contains a review of the ethics cases handled by CGF ethics officers and managers during 2011, the first year of our Ethics Program.

Briefly summarizes content

The ethics cases reported are analyzed according to two categories: (1) major ethics cases, or those potentially involving serious violations of company policy or illegal conduct, and (2) minor ethics cases, or those that do not involve serious policy violations or illegal conduct. The report also examines the mode of contact in all of the reported cases and the disposition of the substantiated major ethics cases.

Offers contact information

It is my hope that this report will provide the Committee with the information needed to assess the effectiveness of the first year of CGF's Ethics Program and to plan for the coming year. Please let me know if you have any questions about this report or if you need any further information. I may be reached at (555) 211-2121 and by e-mail at sl@cgf.com.

Enc.

FIGURE F–5. Formal Report (Cover Memo). Reprinted and adapted by permission of Susan Litzinger, a student at Pennsylvania State University, Altoona.

FIGURE F–5. Formal Report (*continued*) (Title Page)

Adapted from MLA style to fit context

F

ABSTRACT

This report examines the nature and disposition of 3,458 ethics cases handled companywide by CGF Aircraft Corporation's ethics officers and managers during 2011. The purpose of this annual report is to provide the Ethics and Business Conduct Committee with the information necessary for assessing the effectiveness of the Ethics Program's first year of operation. Records maintained by ethics officers and managers of all contacts were compiled and categorized into two main types: (1) major ethics cases, or cases involving serious violations of company policies or illegal conduct, and (2) minor ethics cases, or cases not involving serious policy violations or illegal conduct. This report provides examples of the types of cases handled in each category and analyzes the disposition of 30 substantiated major ethics cases. Recommendations for planning for the second year of the Ethics Program are (1) continuing the channels of communication now available in the Ethics Program, (2) increasing financial and technical support for the Ethics Hotline, (3) disseminating the annual ethics report in some form to employees to ensure employee awareness of the company's commitment to uphold its Ethics Policies and Procedures, and (4) implementing some measure of recognition for ethical behavior to promote and reward ethical conduct.

Summarizes purpose

Methods and scope

Conclusions and recommendations

Lowercase Roman numerals used on front-matter pages

FIGURE F–5. Formal Report (*continued*) (Abstract)

Uniform heading styles

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT iii

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY 1

INTRODUCTION 3

Ethics and Business Conduct Policies and Procedures 3
Confidentiality Issues 4
Documentation of Ethics Cases 4
Major/Minor Category Definition and Examples 5

ANALYSIS OF REPORTED ETHICS CASES 6

Reported Ethics Cases, by Major/Minor Category 6
Major Ethics Cases 6
Minor Ethics Cases 8
Mode of Contact 9

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS 11

WORKS CITED 13

Indented subheads

Page number for each entry

FIGURE F–5. Formal Report (*continued*) (Table of Contents)

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

States purpose

This report examines the nature and disposition of the 3,458 ethics cases handled by the CGF Aircraft Corporation's ethics officers and managers during 2011. The purpose of this report is to provide CGF's Ethics and Business Conduct Committee with the information necessary for assessing the effectiveness of the first year of the company's Ethics Program.

Provides background information

Effective January 1, 2011, the Ethics and Business Conduct Committee (the Committee) implemented a policy and procedures for the administration of CGF's new Ethics Program. The purpose of the Ethics Program, established by the Committee, is to "promote ethical business conduct through open communication and compliance with company ethics standards." The Office of Ethics and Business Conduct was created to administer the Ethics Program. The director of the Office of Ethics and Business Conduct, along with seven ethics officers throughout the corporation, was given the responsibility for the following objectives:

- Communicate the values and standards for CGF's Ethics Program to employees.
- Inform employees about company policies regarding ethical business conduct.
- Establish companywide channels for employees to obtain information and guidance in resolving ethics concerns.
- Implement companywide ethics-awareness and education programs.

Employee accessibility to ethics information and guidance was available through managers, ethics officers, and an ethics hotline.

Describes scope

Major ethics cases were defined as those situations potentially involving serious violations of company policies or illegal conduct. Examples of major ethics cases included cover-up of defective workmanship or use of defective parts in products; discrimination in hiring and promotion; involvement in monetary or other kickbacks; sexual harassment; disclosure of proprietary or company information; theft; and use of corporate Internet resources for inappropriate purposes, such as conducting personal business, gambling, or access to pornography.

FIGURE F–5. Formal Report (*continued*) (Executive Summary)

Reported Ethics Cases—2011

Minor ethics cases were defined as including all reported concerns not classified as major ethics cases. Minor ethics cases were classified as informational queries from employees, situations involving coworkers, and situations involving management.

The effectiveness of CGF's Ethics Program during the first year of implementation is most evidenced by (1) the active participation of employees in the program and the 3,458 contacts employees made regarding ethics concerns through the various channels available to them and (2) the action taken in the cases reported by employees, particularly the disposition of the 30 substantiated major ethics cases. Disseminating information about the disposition of ethics cases, particularly information about the severe disciplinary actions taken in major ethics violations, sends a message to employees that unethical or illegal conduct will not be tolerated.

Summarizes conclusions

Based on these conclusions, recommendations for planning the second year of the Ethics Program are (1) continuing the channels of communication now available in the Ethics Program, (2) increasing financial and technical support for the Ethics Hotline, the most highly used mode of contact in the ethics cases reported in 2011, (3) disseminating this report in some form to employees to ensure their awareness of CGF's commitment to uphold its Ethics Policies and Procedures, and (4) implementing some measure of recognition for ethical behavior, such as an "Ethics Employee of the Month" award to promote and reward ethical conduct.

Includes recommendations

Executive summary is about 10 percent of report length

FIGURE F–5. Formal Report (*continued*) (Executive Summary)

INTRODUCTION

F

Opening states purpose

This report examines the nature and disposition of the 3,458 ethics cases handled companywide by CGF's ethics officers and managers during 2011. The purpose of this report is to provide the Ethics and Business Conduct Committee with the information necessary for assessing the effectiveness of the first year of CGF's Ethics Program. Recommendations are given for the Committee's consideration in planning for the second year of the Ethics Program.

Subheads signal shifts in topic

Ethics and Business Conduct Policies and Procedures

Effective January 1, 2011, the Ethics and Business Conduct Committee (the Committee) implemented Policy CGF-EP-01 and Procedure CGF-EP-02 for the administration of CGF's new Ethics Program. The purpose of the Ethics Program, established by the Committee, is to "promote ethical business conduct through open communication and compliance with company ethics standards" (CGF, "Ethics and Conduct").

The Office of Ethics and Business Conduct was created to administer the Ethics Program. The director of the Office of Ethics and Business Conduct, along with seven ethics officers throughout CGF, was given the responsibility for the following objectives:

List identifies key points

- Communicate the values, standards, and goals of CGF's Ethics Program to employees.
- Inform employees about company ethics policies.
- Provide companywide channels for employee education and guidance in resolving ethics concerns.
- Implement companywide programs in ethics awareness, education, and recognition.
- Ensure confidentiality in all ethics matters.

Employee accessibility to ethics information and guidance became the immediate and key goal of the Office of Ethics and Business Conduct in its first year of operation. The following channels for contact were set in motion during 2011:

FIGURE F–5. Formal Report (*continued*) (Introduction)

- Managers throughout CGF received intensive ethics training; in all ethics situations, employees were encouraged to go to their managers as the first point of contact.
- Ethics officers were available directly to employees through face-to-face or telephone contact, to managers, to callers using the Ethics Hotline, and by e-mail.
- The Ethics Hotline was available to all employees, 24 hours a day, seven days a week, to anonymously report ethics concerns.

Confidentiality Issues
CGF's Ethics Policy ensures confidentiality and anonymity for employees who raise genuine ethics concerns. Procedure CGF-EP-02 guarantees appropriate discipline, up to and including dismissal, for retaliation or retribution against any employee who properly reports any genuine ethics concern.

Documentation of Ethics Cases
The following requirements were established by the director of the Office of Ethics and Business Conduct as uniform guidelines for the documentation by managers and ethics officers of all reported ethics cases:

- Name, position, and department of individual initiating contact, if available
- Date and time of contact
- Name, position, and department of contact person
- Category of ethics case
- Mode of contact
- Resolution

Includes detailed methods

Managers and ethics officers entered the required information in each reported ethics case into an ACCESS database file, enabling efficient retrieval and analysis of the data.

FIGURE F–5. Formal Report (*continued*) (Introduction)

Major/Minor Category Definition and Examples
Major ethics cases were defined as those situations potentially involving serious violations of company policies or illegal conduct. Procedure CGF-EP-02 requires notification of the Internal Audit and the Law departments in serious ethics cases. The staffs of the Internal Audit and the Law departments assume primary responsibility for managing major ethics cases and for working with the employees, ethics officers, and managers involved in each case.

Examples of situations categorized as major ethics cases:

- Cover-up of defective workmanship or use of defective parts in products
- Discrimination in hiring and promotion
- Involvement in monetary or other kickbacks from customers for preferred orders
- Sexual harassment
- Disclosure of proprietary customer or company information
- Theft
- Use of corporate Internet resources for inappropriate purposes, such as conducting private business, gambling, or gaining access to pornography

Organized by decreasing order of importance

Minor ethics cases were defined as including all reported concerns not classified as major ethics cases. Minor ethics cases were classified as follows:

- Informational queries from employees
- Situations involving coworkers
- Situations involving management

FIGURE F–5. Formal Report (*continued*) (Introduction)

Reported Ethics Cases—2011

ANALYSIS OF REPORTED ETHICS CASES

Reported Ethics Cases, by Major/Minor Category
CGF ethics officers and managers companywide handled a total of 3,458 ethics situations during 2011. Of these cases, only 172, or 5 percent, involved reported concerns of a serious enough nature to be classified as major ethics cases (see Figure 1). Major ethics cases were defined as those situations potentially involving serious violations of company policy or illegal conduct.

Text introduces figure

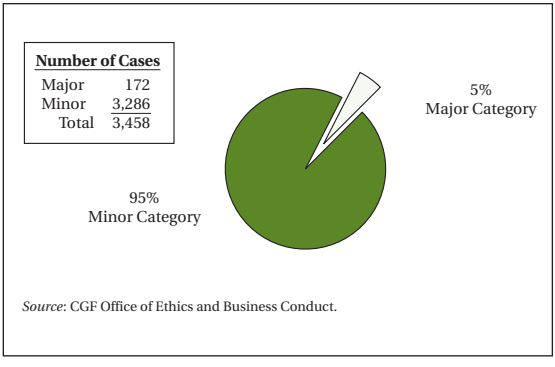


Fig. 1. Reported ethics cases, by major/minor category in 2011.

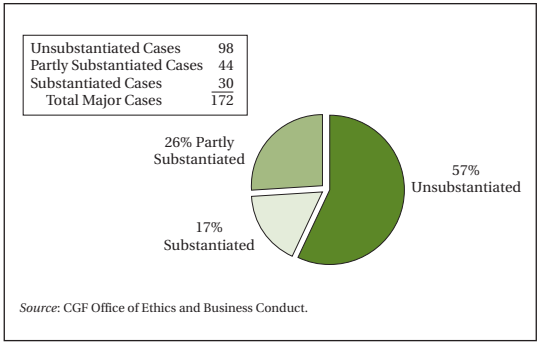
Number and title identify figure

Major Ethics Cases
Of the 172 major ethics cases reported during 2011, 57 percent, upon investigation, were found to involve unsubstantiated concerns. Incomplete information or misinformation most frequently was discovered to be the cause of the unfounded concerns of misconduct in 98 cases. Forty-four cases, or 26 percent of the total cases reported, involved incidents partly substantiated by ethics officers as serious misconduct;

FIGURE F–5. Formal Report (*continued*) (Body)

however, these cases were discovered to also involve inaccurate information or unfounded issues of misconduct.

Only 17 percent of the total number of major ethics cases, or 30 cases, were substantiated as major ethics situations involving serious ethical misconduct or illegal conduct (CGF, "2011 Ethics Hotline Results") (see Fig. 2).



Identifies source of information

Fig. 2. Major ethics cases in 2011.

Of the 30 substantiated major ethics cases, seven remain under investigation at this time, and two cases are currently in litigation. Disposition of the remainder of the 30 substantiated reported ethics cases included severe disciplinary action in five cases: the dismissal of two employees and the demotion of three employees. Seven employees were given written warnings, and nine employees received verbal warnings (see Fig. 3).

FIGURE F–5. Formal Report (*continued*) (Body)

Reported Ethics Cases—2011

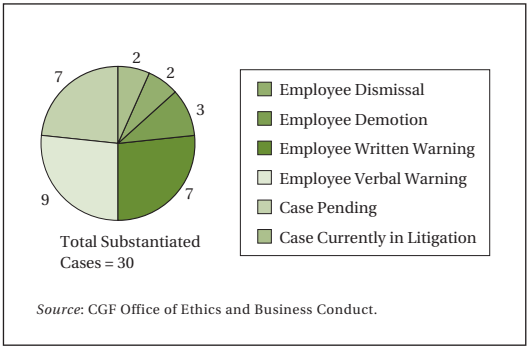


Fig. 3. Disposition of substantiated major ethics cases in 2011.

Minor Ethics Cases

Minor ethics cases included those that did not involve serious violations of company policy or illegal conduct. During 2011, ethics officers and company managers handled 3,286 such cases. Minor ethics cases were further classified as follows:

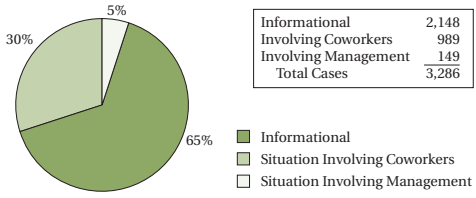
- Informational queries from employees
- Situations involving coworkers
- Situations involving management

Reports findings in detail

As might be expected during the initial year of the Ethics Program implementation, the majority of contacts made by employees were informational, involving questions about the new policies and procedures. These informational contacts comprised 65 percent of all contacts of a minor nature and numbered 2,148. Employees made 989 contacts regarding ethics concerns involving coworkers and 149 contacts regarding ethics concerns involving management (see Fig. 4).

FIGURE F–5. Formal Report (*continued*) (Body)

Reported Ethics Cases—2011



Source: CGF Office of Ethics and Business Conduct.

Fig. 4. Minor ethics cases in 2011.

Mode of Contact

Assesses findings

The effectiveness of the Ethics Program rested on the dissemination of information to employees and the provision of accessible channels through which employees could gain information, report concerns, and obtain guidance. Employees were encouraged to first go to their managers with any ethical concerns, because those managers would have the most direct knowledge of the immediate circumstances and individuals involved.

Other channels were put into operation, however, for any instance in which an employee did not feel able to go to his or her manager. The ethics officers companywide were available to employees through telephone conversations, face-to-face meetings, and e-mail contact. Ethics officers also served as contact points for managers in need of support and assistance in handling the ethics concerns reported to them by their subordinates.

The Ethics Hotline became operational in mid-January 2011 and offered employees assurance of anonymity and confidentiality. The Ethics Hotline was accessible to all employees on a 24-hour, 7-day basis. Ethics officers companywide took responsibility on a rotational basis for handling calls reported through the hotline.

FIGURE F–5. Formal Report (*continued*) (Body)

Reported Ethics Cases—2011

In summary, ethics information and guidance were available to all employees during 2011 through the following channels:

- Employee to manager
- Employee telephone, face-to-face, and e-mail contact with ethics officer
- Manager to ethics officer
- Employee Hotline

The mode of contact in the 3,458 reported ethics cases was as follows (see Fig. 5):

- In 19 percent of the reported cases, or 657, employees went to managers with concerns.
- In 9 percent of the reported cases, or 311, employees contacted an ethics officer.
- In 5 percent of the reported cases, or 173, managers sought assistance from ethics officers.
- In 67 percent of the reported cases, or 2,317, contacts were made through the Ethics Hotline.

Bulleted lists help organize and summarize information

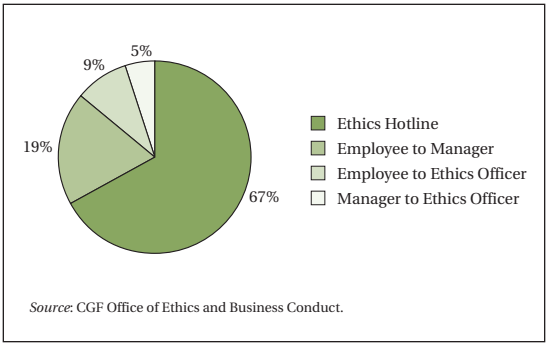


Fig. 5. Mode of contact in reported ethics cases in 2011.

FIGURE F–5. Formal Report (*continued*) (Body)

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Pulls together findings

The effectiveness of CGF's Ethics Program during the first year of implementation is most evidenced by (1) the active participation of employees in the program and the 3,458 contacts employees made regarding ethics concerns through the various channels available to them, and (2) the action taken in the cases reported by employees, particularly the disposition of the 30 substantiated major ethics cases.

Uses sources for support

One of the 12 steps to building a successful Ethics Program identified by Frank Navran in *Workforce* magazine is an ethics communication strategy. Navran explains that such a strategy is crucial in ensuring

> that employees have the information they need in a timely and usable fashion and that the organization is encouraging employee communication regarding the values, standards and the conduct of the organization and its members. (119)

The 3,458 contacts by employees during 2011 attest to the accessibility and effectiveness of the communication channels that exist in CGF's Ethics Program.

An equally important step in building a successful ethics program is listed by Navran as "Measurements and Rewards," which he explains as follows:

Long quotation in MLA style

> In most organizations, employees know what's important by virtue of what the organization measures and rewards. If ethical conduct is assessed and rewarded, and if unethical conduct is identified and dissuaded, employees will believe that the organization's principals mean it when they say the values and code of ethics are important. (121)

Interprets findings

Disseminating information about the disposition of ethics cases, particularly information about the severe disciplinary actions taken in major ethics violations, sends a message to employees that unethical or illegal conduct will not be tolerated. Making public such actions taken in cases of ethical misconduct provides "a golden opportunity to make other employees aware that the behavior is unacceptable and why" (Ferrell, Fraedrich, and Ferrell 129).

FIGURE F–5. Formal Report (*continued*) (Conclusions and Recommendations)

With these two points in mind, I offer the following recommendations for consideration for plans for the Ethics Program's second year:

- Continuation of the channels of communication now available in the Ethics Program
- Increased financial and technical support for the Ethics Hotline, the most highly used mode of contact in the reported ethics cases in 2011
- Dissemination of this report in some form to employees to ensure employees' awareness of CGF's commitment to uphold its Ethics Policy and Procedures
- Implementation of some measure of recognition for ethical behavior, such as an "Ethics Employee of the Month," to promote and reward ethical conduct

Recommends specific steps

To ensure that employees see the value of their continued participation in the Ethics Program, feedback is essential. The information in this annual review, in some form, should be provided to employees. Knowing that the concerns they reported were taken seriously and resulted in appropriate action by Ethics Program administrators would reinforce employee involvement in the program. While the negative consequences of ethical misconduct contained in this report send a powerful message, a means of communicating the *positive* rewards of ethical conduct at CGF should be implemented. Various options for recognition of employees exemplifying ethical conduct should be considered and approved. See MLogs, "Create and Evaluate a Code of Conduct," *Business Ethics Forum*. Management Logs, 12 Sept. 2006. Web. 19 Jan. 2010.

Continuation of the Ethics Program's successful 2011 operations, with the implementation of the above recommendations, should ensure the continued pursuit of the Ethics Program's purpose: "to promote a positive work environment that encourages open communication regarding ethics and compliance issues and concerns."

Links recommendations to company goal

FIGURE F–5. Formal Report (*continued*) (Conclusions and Recommendations)

Section begins on a new page

WORKS CITED

CGF. "Ethics and Conduct at CGF Aircraft Corporation." *CGF Aircraft Corporation*. CGF, 1 Jan. 2010. Web. 11 Feb. 2011.

This report uses MLA style

---. "2011 Ethics Hotline Investigation Results." *CGF Aircraft Corporation*. CGF, 15 Jan. 2012. Web. 11 Feb. 2012.

Ferrell, O. C., John Fraedrich, and Linda Ferrell. *Business Ethics: Business Decision Making and Cases*. 7th ed. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 2008. Print.

Navran, Frank. "12 Steps to Building a Best-Practices Ethics Program." *Workforce* 76.9 (1997): 117-22. Web. 10 Sept. 2009.

FIGURE F–5. Formal Report (*continued*) (Works Cited)

format

Format refers to both the organization of information in a document and the physical arrangement of information on the page.

In one sense, format refers to the conventions that govern the scope and placement of information in such job-related writing as **formal reports**, **proposals**, and various types of **correspondence**. For example, in formal reports, the **table of contents** precedes the preface but follows the title page and the **abstract**. Likewise, although variations exist, parts of **letters**—such as inside address, salutation, and complimentary closing—are arranged in standard patterns. See also **e-mail** and **memos**.

Format also refers to the general physical appearance of a finished document, whether printed or electronic. See also **layout and design** and **writing for the Web**.

former / latter

Former and *latter* should be used to refer to only two items in a sentence or paragraph.

- The president and his aide emerged from the conference, the *former* looking nervous and the *latter* looking glum.

Because these terms make the reader look to previous material to identify the reference, however, they complicate reading and are best avoided.

forms

Forms allow you to gather information from respondents in a standardized print or online design that makes it easy for you to tabulate the responses and evaluate the information. See Figures F–6 and F–7 for two examples of forms.

❖ ETHICS NOTE Information gathered on forms can be sensitive or personal, so make sure to present questions in a way that is not invasive or illegal. Unless otherwise indicated on the form, the person filling out the form should have the expectation of confidentiality. If you are concerned about issues of confidentiality or legality, check your organization's policy or in a classroom seek your instructor's advice. ❖

Form title

104-M S A

Section 125 Flexible Spending Account (FSA) Claim Form

Writing lines

Employee Name: _____

Social Security Number: _____-____-_____

Name of Employer: _____

Employee Signature: _____

Instructions

Complete section below for medical, dental, or vision reimbursement

CLAIM TYPE I: MEDICAL CARE ACCOUNT

Amount of Expense Incurred: $_____

Dates of Services: From: _____ To: _____

Instructions

Complete section below for reimbursement of care for your dependent provided by a child-care facility, an adult dependent-care center, or a caretaker

CLAIM TYPE II: DEPENDENT-CARE ACCOUNT

Amount of Expense Incurred: $_____

Name of Dependent-Care Provider: _____

Provider Social Security or Federal ID Number: ____-__-_____

Mailing and contact information

Mail or fax form with documentation to:
Specialized Benefit Services, Inc.
P.O. Box 498
Framingham, MA 01702
Fax: (508) 877-1182
For additional claim forms: www.sbsclaims.com

FIGURE F–6. Form (for a Medical Claim)

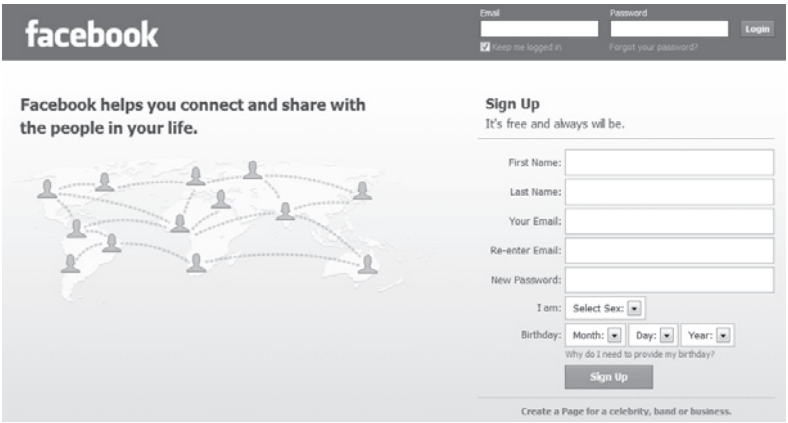


FIGURE F–7. Online Form with Typical Components

Preparing a Form

An effective form makes it easy for one person to supply information and for another person to retrieve, record, and interpret that information. Ideally, a form should be self-explanatory to someone seeing it for the first time. When preparing a form, determine the kind of information you are seeking and arrange the questions in a logical order. To ensure the usability of the form, test it with people from your target **audience** or others before publishing the final version. See also **questionnaires** and **usability testing**.

Choosing Online or Paper. Many organizations provide their forms not only on paper and as downloadable documents but also as interactive online forms. Forms especially well suited for online use include job applications, conference or seminar registrations, and order forms. Online forms standardize respondents' interfaces and link to databases that tabulate and interpret data. An online form can be programmed to ensure that all necessary fields are completed correctly before the form can be successfully submitted. Using online forms can eliminate the problems associated with distributing and collecting forms. However, using online forms can be difficult for people with limited computer literacy or access, so consider your audience carefully before opting to collect your responses online. See also **writing for the Web**.

Writing Instructions. Place instructions at the beginning of the form or at the beginning of each section of the form and use **headings** or other design elements, such as the boldface type and text boxes in Figure F–6, to focus the readers' attention. When necessary, place instructions for distributing the copies of multiple-copy forms at the bottom of

each page of the form. Instructions for submitting printed forms should be clearly indicated, as in Figure F–6. For printed forms, include space for a signature and a date. At the end of online forms, include a "submit" button that is programmed to record the data and to open a new page or send a confirming e-mail informing respondents that their responses have been successfully submitted.

Choosing Response Types. Forms should ask questions in ways that are best suited to the types of data you hope to collect. The two main types are open-ended questions and closed-ended questions.

- *Open-ended questions* allow respondents to answer questions in their own words. Such questions are most appropriate if you wish to elicit responses you may not have anticipated (as in a complaint form) or if there are too many possible answers to use a multiple-choice format. However, the responses to open-ended questions can be difficult to tabulate and analyze.
- *Closed-ended questions* provide a list of options from which the respondent can select, limiting the range of possible responses. When you want to make sure you receive a standardized, easy-to-tabulate response, use any of the types of closed-ended questions that follow:
  - *Multiple choice*: Choose one (or sometimes more than one) response from a preset list of options.
  - *Ranked choice*: Rank items according to preference, such as selecting vacation days or choosing job assignments.
  - *Forced choice*: Choose between two preset options, such as yes / no or male / female.

Wording Questions. Questions are normally presented as short phrases or labels. Keep them brief, specific, and to the point; avoid unnecessary repetition by combining related information under an explanatory heading.

WORDY

What make of car (or vehicle) do you drive? _____
What year was it manufactured? _____
What model is it? _____
What is the body style? _____

CONCISE

Vehicle Information
Make _____ Year _____
Model _____ Body Style _____

If a requested date is other than the date on which the form is being filled out, the label should read, for example, "Effective date" or "Date issued," rather than simply "Date." As in all writing, put yourself in your reader's place and imagine what sort of requests would be clear.

Sequencing Entries. The main portion of the form includes the entries that are required to obtain the necessary data. Arrange entries in an order that will be the most logical to the person filling out the form.

- Sequence entries to fit the subject matter. For instance, a form requesting reimbursement for travel expenses would logically be organized chronologically from the first day of the week (or month) to the last day of the appropriate period.
- If the response to one item is based on the response to another item, be sure the items appear in the correct order.
- Group requests for related information together whenever possible.
- For ease of reading, arrange entries from left to right and from top to bottom.

Designing a Form

At the top of the form, clearly indicate preliminary information, such as the name of your organization, the title of your form, and any reference number. You can design computer-generated forms specific to your needs with form-design software, word-processing software, or markup languages (such as HTML or XML). However you prepare the final version of a form, pay particular attention to design details, especially to the placement of entry lines, labels, and the amount of space allowed for responses.

Entry Lines and Fields. A print form can be designed so that the person filling it out provides information on a writing line, in a writing block, or in square boxes. A *writing line* is simply a rule with a caption, such as the line for "Employee Name" shown in Figure F–6. A *writing block* is essentially the same as a writing line, except that each entry is enclosed in a ruled block, as shown in Figure F–8, making it unlikely for the respondent to associate a caption with the wrong line.

When it is possible to anticipate all likely responses, you can make the form easy to fill out by writing the question on the form, supplying a labeled box for each anticipated answer, and asking the respondent to check the appropriate boxes. Such a design also makes it easy to tabulate the data. Be sure your questions are both simple and specific.

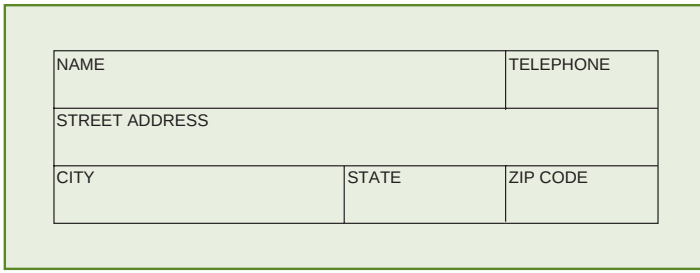


FIGURE F–8. Writing Block for a Form

- Would your department order another X2L Copier? Yes ☐ No ☐

For online forms, these functions are accomplished with form fields such as text boxes, option (or *radio*) buttons, drop-down menus, lists, and checkboxes, which can be aligned using table cells or grouping. Each form field should have a label prompting users to type information or select from a list of options. Labels for text boxes, drop-down menus, and lists should be positioned to the left; labels for radio buttons and checkboxes should be positioned to the right. Be sure as well to indicate required form fields. See Figure F–7 for an example of spacing and alignment in an online form.*

Spacing. Provide enough space to enable the person filling out the form to enter the requested information. Insufficient writing or typing space makes it difficult for people to respond, resulting in responses that are hard to read, abbreviated, or incomplete. Reading responses that are too tightly spaced or that snake around the side of the form can cause errors when tabulating or interpreting data.

fragments (*see* sentence fragments)

functional shift

Many words shift easily from one **part of speech** to another, depending on how they are used. When they do, the process is called a *functional shift*, or a shift in function.

*For up-to-date information on designing online forms, see *www.stcsig.org/usability/topics/forms.html*.

- It takes ten minutes to *walk* from the laboratory to the emergency room. However, the long *walk* reduces efficiency.
  [*Walk* shifts from **verb** to **noun**.]
- I talk to the Chicago office on the *phone* every day. He was concerned about the office *phone* expenses. He will *phone* the home office from London.
  [*Phone* shifts from noun to **adjective** to verb.]
- *After* we discuss the project, we will begin work. *After* lengthy discussions, we began work. The partners worked well together forever *after*.
  [*After* shifts from **conjunction** to **preposition** to **adverb**.]

Jargon is often the result of functional shifts. In hospitals, for example, an *attending physician* is often referred to simply as the "attending" (a shift from an adjective to a noun). Likewise, in nuclear plant construction, a *reactor containment building* is called a "containment" (a shift from an adjective to a noun). Do not shift the function of a word indiscriminately merely to shorten a phrase or an expression. See also **affectation**, **audience**, and **conciseness**.

G

garbled sentences

A garbled sentence is one that is so tangled with structural and grammatical problems that it cannot be repaired. Garbled sentences often result from an attempt to squeeze too many ideas into one sentence.

- My job objectives are accomplished by my having a diversified background which enables me to operate effectively and efficiently, consisting of a degree in computer science, along with twelve years of experience, including three years in Staff Engineering-Packaging sets a foundation for a strong background in areas of analyzing problems and assessing economical and reasonable solutions.

Do not try to patch such a sentence; rather, analyze the ideas it contains, list them in a logical sequence, and then construct one or more entirely new sentences. An analysis of the preceding example yields the following five ideas:

- My job requires that I analyze problems to find economical and workable solutions.
- My diversified background helps me accomplish my job.
- I have a computer-science degree.
- I have twelve years of job experience.
- Three of these years have been in Staff Engineering-Packaging.

Using those five ideas—together with **parallel structure**, **sentence variety**, **subordination**, and **transition**—the writer might have described the job as follows:

- My job requires that I analyze problems to find economical and workable solutions. Both my education and experience help me achieve this goal. Specifically, I have a computer-science degree and twelve years of job experience, three of which have been in the Staff Engineering-Packaging Department.

See also **clarity**, **mixed constructions**, and **sentence construction**.

gender

In English grammar, *gender* refers to the classification of **nouns** and **pronouns** as masculine, feminine, and neuter. The gender of most words can be identified only by the choice of the appropriate pronoun (*he*, *she*, *it*). Only these pronouns and a select few nouns (*man* / *woman*, *buck* / *doe*) or noun forms (*heir* / *heiress*) reflect gender. Many such nouns have been replaced by single terms for both sexes. See also **biased language** and **he / she**.

Gender is important to writers because they must be sure that nouns and pronouns within a grammatical construction agree in gender. A pronoun, for example, must agree with its noun antecedent in gender. We refer to a woman as *she* or *her*, not as *it*; to a man as *he* or *him*, not as *it*; to a building as *it*, not as *he* or *she*. See also **agreement**.

ESL TIP for Assigning Gender

The English language has an almost complete lack of gender distinctions. That can be confusing for a nonnative speaker of English whose native language may assign gender. In the few cases in which English does make a gender distinction, there is a close connection between the assigning of gender and the sex of the subject. The few instances in which gender distinctions are made in English are summarized as follows:

Subject pronouns	he / she
Object pronouns	him / her
Possessive adjectives	his / her(s)
Some nouns	king / queen, boy / girl, bull / cow, among others

When a noun, such as *doctor*, can refer to a person of either sex, you need to know the sex of the person to whom the noun refers to determine the gender-appropriate pronoun.

- The doctor gave *her* patients advice.
  [Doctor is female.]
- The doctor gave *his* patients advice.
  [Doctor is male.]

When the sex of the noun antecedent is unknown, be sure to follow the guidelines for nonsexist writing in the entry **biased language**. (*Note*: Some English speakers refer to vehicles and countries as *she*, but contemporary usage favors *it*.)

general and specific methods of development

General and specific **methods of development** organize information either from general points to specific details (Figure G–1) or from specific details to a general conclusion (Figure G–2). As with all methods of development, rarely does a writer rely on only one method throughout a document. Most documents blend methods and use combinations of methods.

General to Specific

The general-to-specific method of development is especially useful for teaching **readers** about something with which they are not familiar because you can begin with generally known information and lead to new and increasingly specific details. This method can also be used to sup-

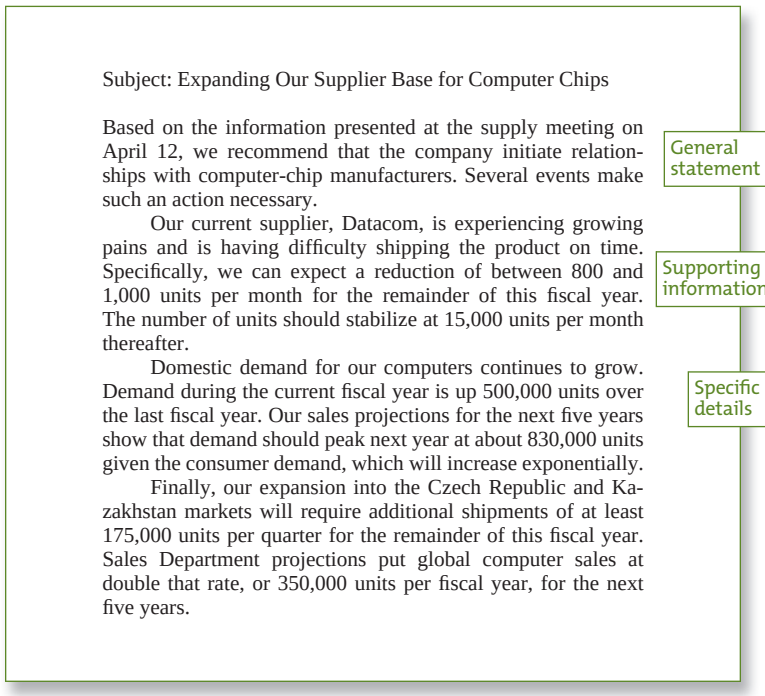

Subject: Expanding Our Supplier Base for Computer Chips
Based on the information presented at the supply meeting on April 12, we recommend that the company initiate relationships with computer-chip manufacturers. Several events make such an action necessary.
Our current supplier, Datacom, is experiencing growing pains and is having difficulty shipping the product on time. Specifically, we can expect a reduction of between 800 and 1,000 units per month for the remainder of this fiscal year. The number of units should stabilize at 15,000 units per month thereafter.
Domestic demand for our computers continues to grow. Demand during the current fiscal year is up 500,000 units over the last fiscal year. Our sales projections for the next five years show that demand should peak next year at about 830,000 units given the consumer demand, which will increase exponentially.
Finally, our expansion into the Czech Republic and Kazakhstan markets will require additional shipments of at least 175,000 units per quarter for the remainder of this fiscal year. Sales Department projections put global computer sales at double that rate, or 350,000 units per fiscal year, for the next five years.
General statement
Supporting information
Specific details

FIGURE G–1. General-to-Specific Method of Development

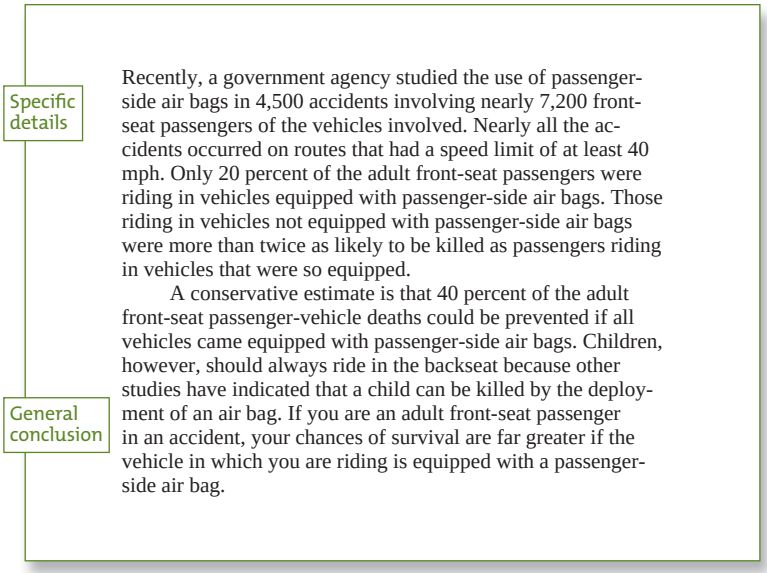

Specific details
Recently, a government agency studied the use of passenger-side air bags in 4,500 accidents involving nearly 7,200 front-seat passengers of the vehicles involved. Nearly all the accidents occurred on routes that had a speed limit of at least 40 mph. Only 20 percent of the adult front-seat passengers were riding in vehicles equipped with passenger-side air bags. Those riding in vehicles not equipped with passenger-side air bags were more than twice as likely to be killed as passengers riding in vehicles that were so equipped.
A conservative estimate is that 40 percent of the adult front-seat passenger-vehicle deaths could be prevented if all vehicles came equipped with passenger-side air bags. Children, however, should always ride in the backseat because other studies have indicated that a child can be killed by the deployment of an air bag. If you are an adult front-seat passenger in an accident, your chances of survival are far greater if the vehicle in which you are riding is equipped with a passenger-side air bag.
General conclusion

FIGURE G–2. Specific-to-General Method of Development

port a general statement with facts or examples that validate the statement. For example, if you begin your writing with the general statement "Companies that diversify are more successful than those that do not," you could follow that statement with examples and statistics that prove to the reader that companies that diversify are, in fact, more successful than companies that do not.

A memo or short report organized entirely in a general-to-specific sequence discusses only one point. All other information in the document supports the general statement, as illustrated in Figure G–1 from a memo about locating additional computer-chip suppliers.

Specific to General

Specific-to-general development is especially useful when you wish to persuade skeptical readers of a general principle with an accumulation of specific details and evidence that reach a logical **conclusion**. It carefully builds its case, often with examples and analogies in addition to facts or statistics, and does not actually make its point until the end. (See also **order-of-importance method of development**.) Figure G–2 is an example of the specific-to-general method of development.

global communication

The prevalence of global communication technology and international markets means that the ability to communicate with **audiences** from varied cultural backgrounds is essential. The audiences for such communications include clients and customers as well as business partners and colleagues.

Many entries in this book, such as **meetings** and **résumés**, are based on U.S. cultural patterns. The treatment of such topics might be very different in other cultures where leadership styles, persuasive strategies, and even legal constraints differ. As illustrated in **international correspondence**, organizational patterns, forms of courtesy, and ideas about efficiency can vary significantly from culture to culture. What might be seen as direct and efficient in the United States could be considered blunt and even impolite in other cultures. The reasons behind these differing ways of viewing communication are complex. Researchers have found various ways to measure cultural differences through such concepts as the importance of saving face, perceptions of time, and individual versus group orientation.

Anthropologist Edward T. Hall, a pioneer in cross-cultural research, developed the concept of "contexting" to assess the predominant communication style of a culture.* By contexting, Hall means how much or how little an individual assumes another person understands about a subject under discussion. In very low-context communication, the participants assume they share little knowledge and must communicate in great detail; thus, thorough documentation is important—written agreements (contracts) are expected, and rules are explicitly defined.

In high-context communication, the participants assume they understand the **context** and thus depend on shared history (context) to communicate with each other. Thus, communications such as written contracts are not so important, while communication that relies on personal relationships and shared history is paramount. Of course, no culture is entirely high or low context; rather, these concepts can help you communicate more effectively with those in a particular culture.

WRITER'S CHECKLIST **Communicating Globally**

- ✔ Discuss the differing cultures within your company or region to reinforce the idea that people can interpret verbal and nonverbal communications differently.

*Edward T. Hall and Mildred Reed Hall, *Understanding Cultural Differences: Germans, French and Americans* (Boston: Intercultural Press, 1990).

WRITER'S CHECKLIST **Communicating Globally (*continued*)**

- ✔ Invite global and intercultural communication experts to speak at your workplace. Companies in your area may have employees who could be resources for cultural discussions.
- ✔ Understand that the key to effective communication with global audiences is recognizing that cultural differences, despite the challenges they may present, offer opportunities for growth for both you and your organization.
- ✔ Consult with someone from your intended audience's culture. Many phrases, gestures, and visual elements are so subtle that only someone who is very familiar with the culture can explain the effect they may have on others from that culture. See also **global graphics**.

WEB LINK **Intercultural Resources**

Intercultural Press publishes "books and training materials that help professionals, businesspeople, travelers, and scholars understand the meaning and diversity of culture." (See *www.interculturalpress.com*.) For other resources for global communication, see ***bedfordstmartins.com/alred*** and select *Links for Handbook Entries*.

global graphics

In a global business and technological environment, **graphs** and other **visuals** require the same careful attention given to other aspects of **global communication**. The complex cultural connotations of visuals challenge writers to think beyond their own experience when they are aiming for audiences outside their own culture.

Symbols, images, and even colors are not free from cultural associations—they depend on **context**, and context is culturally determined. For instance, in North America, a red cross is commonly used as a symbol for first aid or a hospital. In Muslim countries, however, a cross (red or otherwise) represents Christianity, whereas a crescent (usually green) signifies first aid or a hospital. A manual for use in Honduras could indicate "caution" by using a picture of a person touching a finger below the eye. In France, however, using that gesture would mean "You can't fool me."

Figure G–3 shows two different graphics depicting weight lifters. The drawing at the left may be appropriate for U.S. audiences and

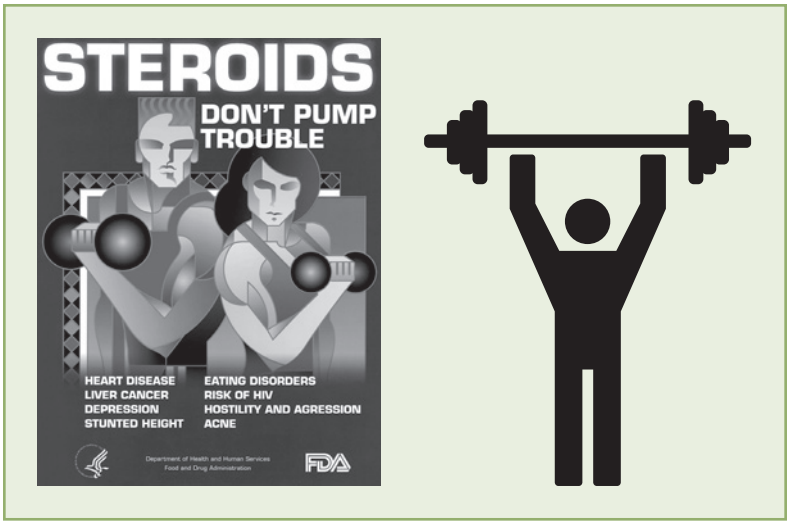


FIGURE G–3. Graphics for U.S. (left) and Global (right) Audiences

others. However, that image would be highly inappropriate in many cultures where the image of a partially clothed man and woman in close proximity would be contrary to deeply held cultural beliefs and even laws about the public depiction of men and women. The drawing at the right, however, depicts a weight lifter by using a neutral icon that avoids the connotations associated with more realistic images of people. These examples suggest why the International Organization for Standardization (ISO) established agreed-upon symbols, such as those shown in Figure G–4, designed for public signs, guidebooks, and manuals.

◖ PROFESSIONALISM NOTE Careful attention to the connotations that visual elements may have for a global **audience** makes translations easier, prevents embarrassment, and earns respect for a company and its products and services. See also **connotation / denotation**. ◗

FIGURE G–4. International Organization for Standardization (ISO) Symbols

WRITER'S CHECKLIST **Communicating with Global Graphics**

- ✔ Consult with someone or test your use of graphics with people from your intended audience's country who understand the effect that visual elements will have on readers or listeners. See also **presentations** and **usability testing**.
- ✔ Organize visual information for the intended audience. For example, North Americans read visuals from left to right in clockwise rotation. Middle Eastern readers typically read visuals from right to left in counterclockwise rotation.
- ✔ Be sure that the graphics have no unintended political or religious implications.
- ✔ Carefully consider how you depict people in visuals. Nudity in advertising, for example, may be acceptable in some cultures, but in others showing even isolated bare body parts can alienate audiences.
- ✔ Use outlines or neutral abstractions to represent human beings. For example, use stick figures and avoid representing men and women.
- ✔ Examine how you display body positions in signs and visuals. Body positioning can carry unintended cultural meanings very different from your own. For example, some Middle Eastern cultures regard the display of the soles of one's shoes to be disrespectful and offensive.
- ✔ Choose neutral colors (or those you know are appropriate) for your graphics; generally, black-and-white and gray-and-white illustrations work well. Colors can be problematic. For example, in North America, Europe, and Japan, red indicates danger. In China, however, red symbolizes good fortune and joy.
- ✔ Check your use of punctuation marks, which are as language specific as symbols. For example, in North America, the question mark generally represents the need for information or the help function in a computer manual or program. In many countries, that symbol has no meaning at all.
- ✔ Create simple visuals and use consistent labels for all visual items. In most cultures, simple shapes with fewer elements are easier to read.

glossaries

A glossary is an alphabetical list of definitions of specialized terms used in a **formal report**, a **manual**, or other long document. You may want to include a glossary if some readers in your **audience** are not familiar with specialized or technical terms you use.

Keep glossary entries concise and be sure they are written in language that all your readers can understand.

- ***Amplitude modulation***: Varying the amplitude of a carrier current with an audio-frequency signal.

Arrange the terms alphabetically, with each entry beginning on a new line. The definitions then follow the terms, dictionary style. In a formal report, the glossary begins on a new page and appears after the appendix(es) and bibliography.

Including a glossary does not relieve you of the responsibility of **defining terms** that your reader will not know when those terms are first mentioned in the text.

gobbledygook

Gobbledygook is writing that suffers from an overdose of traits guaranteed to make it stuffy, pretentious, and wordy. Such traits include the overuse of big and mostly **abstract words**, **affectation** (especially long variants), **buzzwords**, **clichés**, **euphemisms**, inappropriate **jargon**, stacked **modifiers**, and **vague words**. Gobbledygook is writing that attempts to sound official (officialese), legal (legalese), or scientific. Consider the following statement from an auto-repair release form.

LEGALESE I hereby authorize the above repair work to be done along with the necessary material and hereby grant you and/or your employees permission to operate the car or truck herein described on streets, highways, or elsewhere for the purpose of testing and/or inspection. An express mechanic's lien is hereby acknowledged on above car or truck to secure the amount of repairs thereto.

DIRECT You have my permission to do the repair work listed on this work order and to use the necessary material. You may drive my vehicle to test its performance. I understand that you will keep my vehicle until I have paid for all repairs.

See also **clarity**, **conciseness**, **plain language**, and **word choice**.

good / well

Good is an **adjective**, and *well* is an **adverb**.

ADJECTIVE Janet presented a *good* plan.

ADVERB She presented the plan *well*.

Well also can be used as an adjective to describe health (a *well* child, *wellness* programs). See also **bad / badly**.

grammar

Grammar is the systematic description of the way words work together to form a coherent language. In that sense, it is an explanation of the structure of a language. However, grammar is popularly taken to mean the set of rules that governs how a language ought to be spoken and written. In that sense, it refers to the **usage** conventions of a language.

Those two meanings of grammar—how the language functions and how it ought to function—are easily confused. To clarify the distinction, consider the expression *ain't*. Unless used intentionally to add colloquial flavor, *ain't* is unacceptable because its use is considered nonstandard. Yet taken strictly as a **part of speech**, the term functions perfectly well as a verb. Whether it appears in a declarative sentence ("I *ain't* going") or an interrogative sentence ("*Ain't* I going?"), it conforms to the normal pattern for all verbs in the English language. Although readers may not approve of its use, they cannot argue that it is ungrammatical in such sentences.

To achieve **clarity**, you need to know both grammar (as a description of the way words work together) and the conventions of usage. Knowing the conventions of usage helps you select the appropriate over the inappropriate word or expression. (See also **word choice**.) A knowledge of grammar helps you diagnose and correct problems arising from how words and phrases function in relation to one another. For example, knowing that certain words and phrases function to modify other words and phrases gives you a basis for correcting those **modifiers** that are not doing their job. Understanding **dangling modifiers** helps you avoid or correct a construction that obscures the intended meaning. In short, an understanding of grammar and its special terminology is valuable chiefly because it enables you to recognize and correct problems so that you can communicate clearly and precisely. For a complete list of grammar entries, see the Contents by Topic on the inside front cover.

WEB LINK	Getting Help with Grammar
For helpful Web sites and grammar exercises, see ***bedfordstmartins.com/alred***, and select *Links for Handbook Entries* and *Exercise Central*.	

grant proposals

Grant proposals are written to nonprofit and government organizations to request the approval of and funding for projects that solve a problem or fulfill a need. A scientist, for example, may write a grant to the National Institutes of Health to request a specific sum of money to study a new cancer therapy or the executive director of Habitat for Humanity may write a grant to a local government requesting funding to purchase supplies to construct new housing for disadvantaged families in the area.

The advice in the entry **proposals** for assessing audience and purpose, writing persuasively, maintaining **ethics in writing**, and managing a project within a tight deadline applies as well to writing grant proposals. This entry focuses on the particular needs of grant writers.

WEB LINK	Sample Grant Proposals
For samples of full grant proposals, see ***bedfordstmartins.com/alred*** and select *Model Documents Gallery*.	

Granting organizations typically post opportunities, along with detailed application guidelines, on their Web sites and specify their requirements for the format and content of proposals. Most federal and state government grants are now submitted electronically, and various sections may have imposed word or character limits that are enforced electronically. When preparing a nonelectronic proposal, always organize its elements in the exact order described or required in the **request for proposals** (RFP) or in the grant maker's guidelines. Although application guidelines and processes may differ from one organization to another, grant proposals generally require the following sections at a minimum:

- Cover letter
- Title page
- Application form
- Introduction / summary

- Literature review (if needed)
- Project narrative
  - *Project description*
  - *Project outcomes*
  - *Budget narrative*
  - *Task schedule*
- Organization description
- Conclusion
- Attachments (appendixes)

Cover Letter

Usually one page long, the **cover letter** should identify who you are and your affiliation. It should specify the grant that you are applying for, summarize the proposed project, and include the amount of funding you are requesting.

Title Page

On a single page, show the **title** of the project, names of project staff and their affiliations, date submitted, and the name of the recipient's organization. This page serves as the cover of the grant proposal.

Application Form

Particularly in electronic grant applications, an application form may replace the cover letter and title page. This form may be one or more pages and may require you to check boxes, fill in blanks, or insert brief descriptions or other information into text boxes or blank spaces. A word or character limit (typically 250–400 words) may be imposed or enforced. An official signature (or its electronic equivalent) is often required. This section may request detailed information about the applicant organization, such as staff or board of directors' demographic composition or its human resources policies.

Introduction / Summary

The **introduction** is your proposal at a glance—it briefly describes (within a given limit) the problem to be solved and projects the expected outcomes of your grant proposal. If substantial **research** is involved, you may also describe your proposed research methods (interviews, questionnaires, videotapes, observations, etc.) in a separate paragraph. See also **abstracts**.

Literature Review

The literature review section lists the relevant research sources you consulted in preparing your proposal. Also called a *References* or *Works Cited* section, it allows reviewers of your proposal to assess your familiarity with current research in the field. Is your research up to date? Thorough? Pertinent? Be selective: include only relevant journal articles, books, interviews, broadcasts, **blogs / forums**, and other sources. In nonresearch proposals (those not based on secondary or formal research) a limited number of citations are frequently included in text within the project narrative or as footnotes or endnotes.

Project Narrative

The heart of the proposal, the project narrative describes in detail the scope of work, expected outcomes, list of tasks, project activity schedule from start to finish, and estimated cost. Be specific and thorough.

Project Description. The project description includes an overview of the project and details of how the research project or program will be conducted (its methodology). In nonresearch proposals, include a succinct *statement of need*—also called a *case statement*—which presents the facts and evidence that support the need for the project. The information presented can come from authorities in the field, as well as from your agency's own experience or research. A logical and persuasive statement of need demonstrates that your company or nonprofit organization sufficiently understands the situation and is therefore capable of addressing it satisfactorily. Clearly indicate why or how your solution improves on existing or previous ones, and cite evidence to support this. Emphasize the benefits of the proposed activities for the grant maker's intended constituency or target population and why your solution to the problem or plan to fulfill the need should be approved. Most RFPs and grant-maker guidelines provide a list of specific questions for applicants to answer or required topics that must be persuasively addressed in this section.

Project Outcomes. Having described the preparations and justification for the program, the grant writer must describe the outcomes or deliverables of the proposal—what the funding organization can expect as a result of the time, labor, and financial support it has invested in the program. Outcomes are stated as quantifiable objectives—improvements in reading scores, volume of carbon emission reductions, aerobic fitness measures, and so on. Grant proposals, especially those solicited by government agencies, also must provide detailed plans for collecting,

analyzing, and interpreting data to evaluate the success or failure of the research or program in achieving the stated outcomes.*

Budget Narrative. Next, include a budget-narrative section that provides a detailed listing of costs for personnel, equipment, building renovations, and other grant-related expenses. This information must be clear, accurate, and in a format easily grasped by those evaluating the data (usually in a **table**). Many grant makers, including government agencies, require that specified budget forms be used. If your proposal is approved, you are being entrusted with funds belonging to someone else and you are accountable for them. Your cost estimates may also be subject to changes over which you have no control, such as price increases for equipment, software, or consulting assistance. The project may also require ongoing funding following completion of the grant's tasks. Either estimate such costs or note that they will appear in a Future Funding or Sustainability section.

Task Schedule. Next, prepare a schedule of tasks that need to be performed to implement the program or complete the project. Arrange them as bulleted points in sequence from first to last with due dates for each, or present them in a table or perhaps in a Gantt chart as described in **graphs**.

Organization Description

The organization description may follow the Introduction or it may be placed just prior to the Conclusion, depending on RFP requirements or grant-maker guidelines. Describe the applicant organization briefly in terms of mission, history, qualifications, and credibility (significant, related accomplishments), taking care to include all information requested in the RFP or grant guidelines. Grant makers consider not only the merits of the proposed program or research but also your organization's standing in the community and similar accomplishments.

Conclusion

This brief wrap-up section emphasizes the benefits or advantages of your project. This section affords you one more opportunity to give the funding organization a reason why your proposal merits its support. Emphasize the benefits of the research, program, or other activities for

*Many grant writers find the system called SMART useful. The SMART system assists writers in setting feasible performance goals and means of measuring success. It is described at www.yale.edu/hronline/focus/goal.html, www.ala.org/ala/mgrps/divs/acrl/about/sections/is/projpubs/smartobjectives/index.cfm, and http://writenowconsulting.com.

the grant maker's intended constituency or target population. Finally, express your appreciation for the opportunity to submit the proposal and close with a statement of your willingness to provide further information.

Attachments (Appendixes)

Funding organizations request supporting information, such as nonprofit-status documentation, copies of legal documents (for example, articles of incorporation or bylaws), or lists of information that you may need to design and compose yourself. Provide a comprehensive list of attachments and clearly label each item to guide the grant reviewer in evaluating the proposal package. See also **appendixes**.

WRITER'S CHECKLIST **Writing Grant Proposals**

- ✔ Analyze the granting organization's RFP or guidelines carefully to best formulate your request to match its funding interests and priorities.
- ✔ Review the descriptions of proposal contexts, strategies, and types in the **proposals** entry.
- ✔ Respond to every question or address every topic requested.
- ✔ Strive for **conciseness** in the narrative without sacrificing **clarity** — make every word count.
- ✔ Emphasize the benefits of your proposal to the granting organization and its constituents.
- ✔ Follow all instructions meticulously because failure to include requested information or to observe format requirements may be grounds for rejection or lack of review.

WEB LINK **Resources for Preparing Grant Proposals**

For useful Web sources for preparing grant proposals, go to *bedfordstmartins.com/alred* and select *Links for Handbook Entries.*

graphs

A graph presents numerical or quantitative data in visual form and offers several advantages over presenting data within the text or in **tables**. Trends, movements, distributions, comparisons, and cycles are more readily apparent in graphs than they are in tables. However, although graphs present data in a more comprehensible form than tables do, they are less precise. For that reason, some **audiences** may need graphs to be accompanied by tables that give exact data. The types of graphs described in this entry include line graphs, bar graphs, pie graphs, and picture graphs. For advice on integrating graphs within text, see **visuals**; for information about using presentation graphics, see **presentations**.

Line Graphs

A line graph shows the relationship between two variables or sets of numbers by plotting points in relation to two axes drawn at right angles (Figure G–5). The vertical axis usually represents amounts, and the horizontal axis usually represents increments of time. Line graphs that portray more than one set of variables (double-line graphs) allow for comparisons between two sets of data for the same period of time. You can emphasize the difference between the two lines by shading the space between them, as shown in Figure G–5.

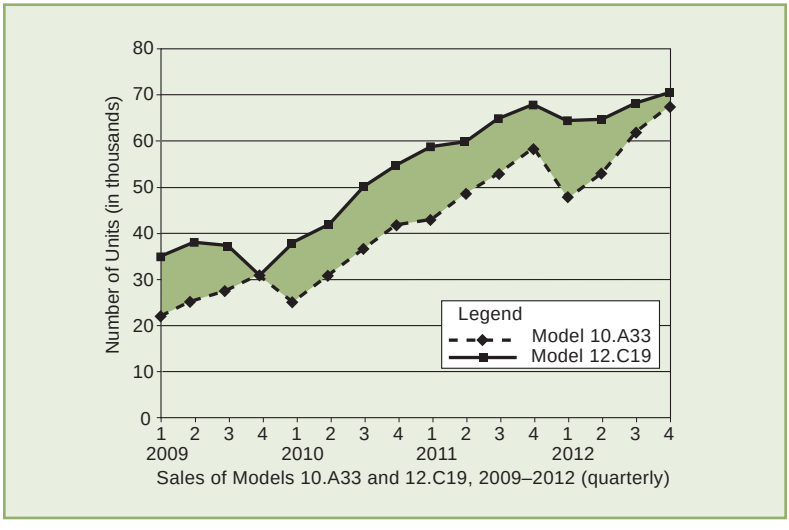


FIGURE G–5. Double-Line Graph (with Shading)

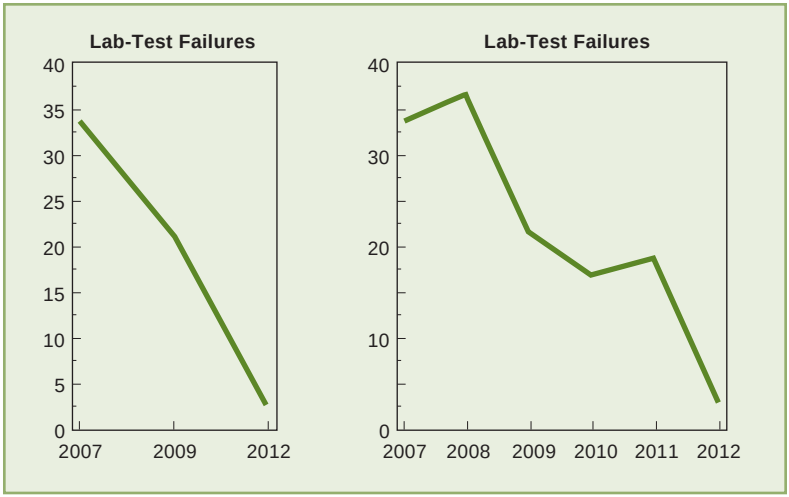


FIGURE G–6. Distorted (left) and Distortion-Free (right) Expressions of Data

❖ ETHICS NOTE Be especially careful to proportion the vertical and horizontal scales so that they give a precise presentation of the data that is free of visual distortion. To do otherwise is not only inaccurate but potentially unethical. (See **ethics in writing**.) In Figure G–6, the graph at the left gives the appearance of a dramatic decrease in lab-test failures because the scale is unevenly compressed, with some years selectively omitted. The graph at the right represents the trend more accurately because the years are evenly distributed without omissions. ❖

Bar Graphs

Bar graphs consist of horizontal or vertical bars of equal width, scaled in length to represent some quantity. They are commonly used to show (1) quantities of the same item at different times, (2) quantities of different items at the same time, and (3) quantities of the different parts of an item that make up a whole (in which case, the segments of the bar graph must total 100 percent). The horizontal bar graph in Figure G–7 shows the quantities of different items for the same period of time.

Bar graphs can also show the different portions of an item that make up the whole, as shown in Figure G–8. Such a bar graph is divided according to the appropriate proportions of the subcomponents of the item. This type of graph, also called a *column graph* when constructed vertically, can indicate multiple items. Where such items represent parts of a whole, as in Figure G–8, the segments in the bar graph must total

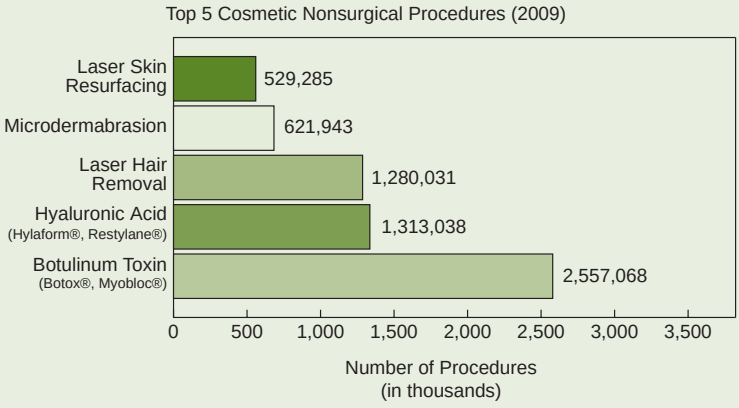


FIGURE G–7. Bar Graph (Quantities of Different Items During a Fixed Period)

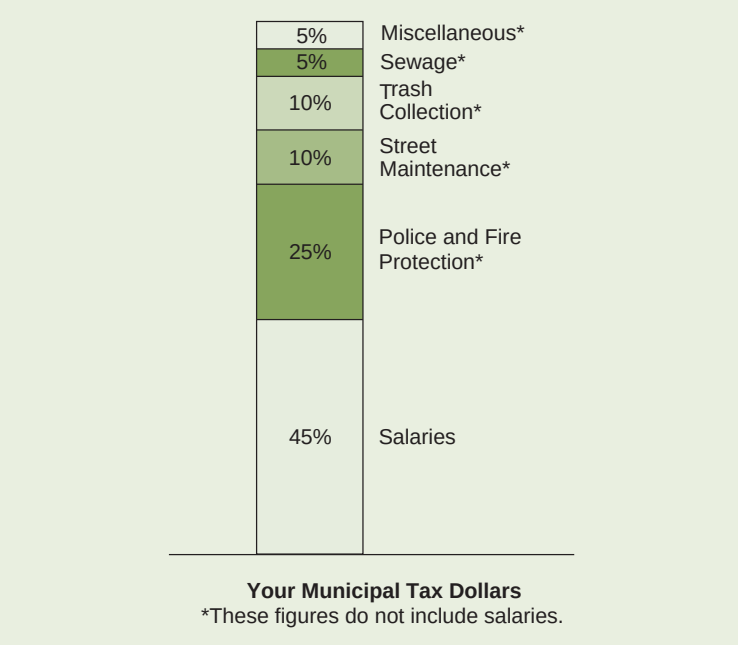


FIGURE G–8. Bar (Column) Graph (Showing the Parts That Make Up the Whole)

100 percent. Note that in addition to labels, each subdivision of a bar graph must be marked clearly by color, shading, or crosshatching, with a key or labels that identify the subdivisions represented. Be aware that three-dimensional graphs can make sections seem larger than the amounts they represent.

A Gantt chart is a type of horizontal bar graph designed to plan and track the status of projects from beginning to end.* As shown in Figure G–9, the horizontal axis represents the length of a project divided into time increments—days, weeks, or months. The timeline usually runs across the top of the chart. The vertical axis represents the individual tasks that make up the project and can include a second column listing the staff responsible for each task. The horizontal bars in the body of the chart identify each task and show its beginning and end dates. Gantt charts are often prepared with spreadsheet or project-management software. See also **collaborative writing**.

WEB LINK	Resources for Preparing Gantt Charts
For useful Web sources for preparing Gantt charts, go to ***bedford stmartins.com/alred***, and select *Links for Handbook Entries* or *Try a Tutorial on Web Design*.	

Pie Graphs

A pie graph presents data as wedge-shaped sections of a circle. The circle equals 100 percent, or the whole, of some quantity, and the wedges represent how the whole is divided. Many times, the data shown in a bar graph could also be depicted in a pie graph. For example, Figure G–8 shows percentages of a whole in a bar-graph form. In Figure G–10, the same data are converted into a pie graph, dividing "Your Municipal Tax Dollars" into wedge-shaped sections that represent percentages with salaries emphasized. Pie graphs provide a quicker way of presenting information that can be shown in a table with a more-detailed breakdown of the same information often accompanies a pie graph.

Picture Graphs

Picture graphs are modified bar graphs that use pictorial symbols of the item portrayed. Each symbol corresponds to a specified quantity of the item, as shown in Figure G–11. Note that for precision and clarity, the picture graph includes the total quantity above the symbols.

*The Gantt chart was developed as a production control tool in 1917 by Henry L. Gantt, an American engineer and social scientist.

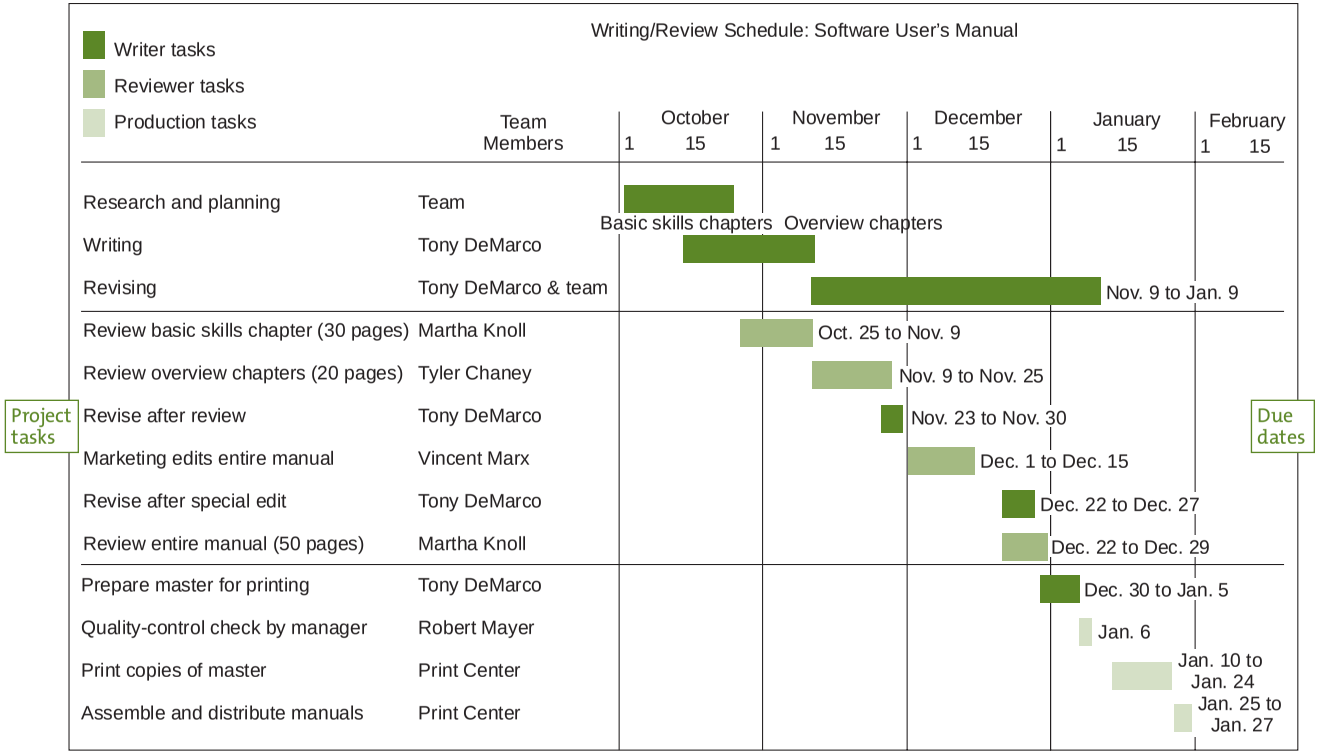


FIGURE G–9. Gantt Chart Showing Project Schedule

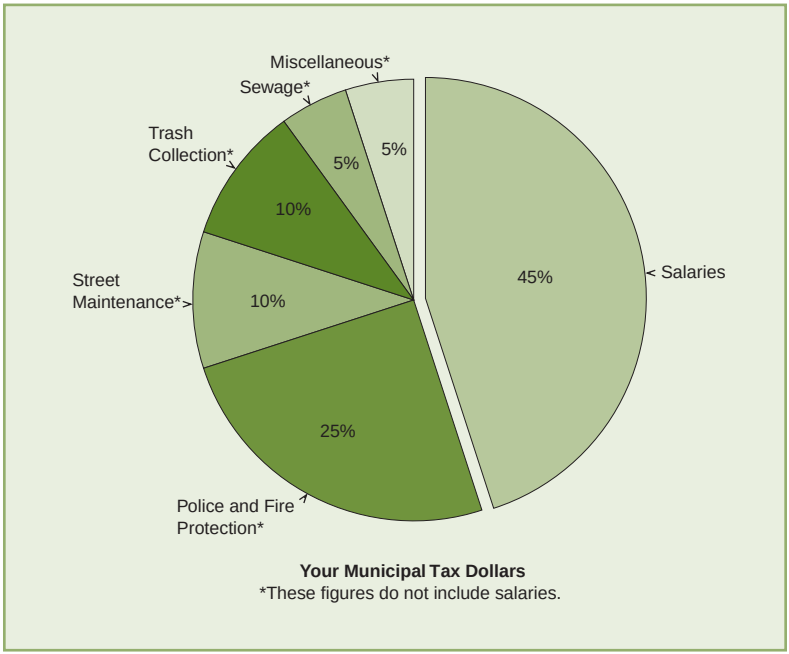


FIGURE G–10. Pie Graph (Showing Percentages of the Whole)

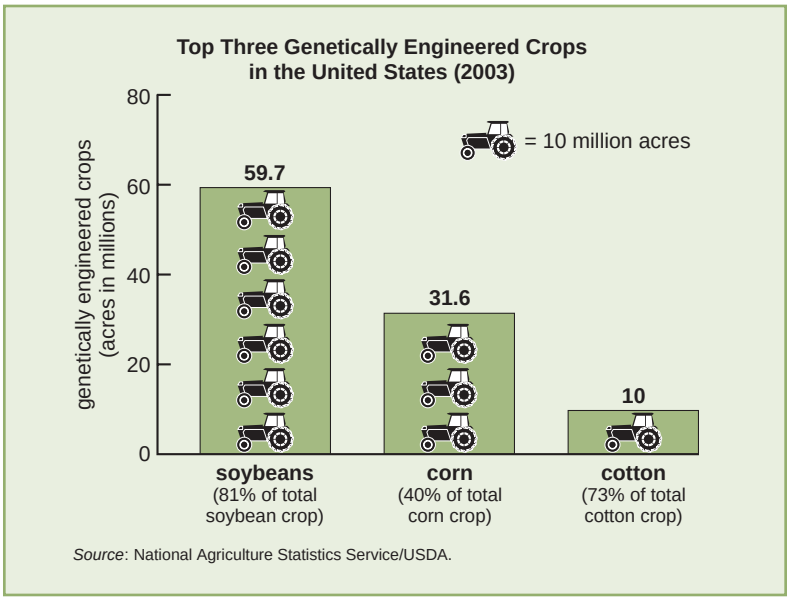


FIGURE G–11. Picture Graph

WRITER'S CHECKLIST **Creating Graphs**

FOR ALL GRAPHS

- ✔ Use, as needed, a key or legend that lists and defines symbols (see Figure G–5).
- ✔ Include a source line under the graph at the lower left when the data come from another source (see Figure G–7).
- ✔ Place explanatory footnotes directly below the figure caption or label (see Figures G–8 and G–10).

FOR LINE GRAPHS

- ✔ Indicate the zero point of the graph (the point where the two axes intersect).
- ✔ Insert a break in the scale if the range of data shown makes it inconvenient to begin at zero.
- ✔ Divide the vertical axis into equal portions, from the least amount (or zero) at the bottom to the greatest amount at the top.
- ✔ Divide the horizontal axis into equal units from left to right. If a label is necessary, center it directly beneath the scale.
- ✔ Make all lettering read horizontally if possible, although the caption or label for the vertical axis is usually positioned vertically (see Figure G–5).

FOR BAR GRAPHS

- ✔ Differentiate among the types of data each bar or part of a bar represents by color, shading, or crosshatching.
- ✔ Avoid three-dimensional graphs when they make bars seem larger than the amounts they represent.

FOR PIE GRAPHS

- ✔ Make sure that the complete circle is equivalent to 100 percent.
- ✔ Sequence the wedges clockwise from largest to smallest, beginning at the 12 o'clock position, whenever possible.
- ✔ Limit the number of items in the pie graph to avoid clutter and to ensure that the slices are thick enough to be clear.
- ✔ Give each wedge a distinctive color, pattern, shade, or texture.
- ✔ Label each wedge with its percentage value and keep all call-outs (labels that identify the wedges) horizontal.
- ✔ Detach a slice, as shown in Figure G–10, if you wish to draw attention to a particular segment of the pie graph.

(*continued*)

WRITER'S CHECKLIST **Creating Graphs (*continued*)**

FOR PICTURE GRAPHS

- ✔ Indicate the zero point of the graph when appropriate.
- ✔ Use picture graphs to add interest to **presentations** and documents (such as **newsletters**) that are aimed at wide audiences.
- ✔ Choose symbols that are easily recognizable. See also **global graphics**.
- ✔ Let each symbol represent the same number of units.
- ✔ Indicate larger quantities by using more symbols, instead of larger symbols, because relative sizes are difficult to judge accurately.
- ✔ Indicate the total quantity along with the symbols, as shown in Figure G–11.

H

he / she

The use of either *he* or *she* to refer to both sexes excludes half of the population. (See also **biased language**.) To avoid this problem, you could use the phrases *he or she* and *his or her*. ("Whoever is appointed will find *his or her* task difficult.") However, *he or she* and *his or her* are clumsy when used repeatedly, as are *he/she* and similar constructions. One solution is to reword the sentence to use a plural **pronoun**; if you do, change the **nouns** or other pronouns to match the plural form.

- Administrators ~~The administrator~~ cannot do their jobs ~~his or her job~~ until they understand ~~he or she understands~~ the organization's culture.

In other cases, you may be able to avoid using a pronoun altogether.

- Everyone must submit an ~~his or her~~ expense report by Monday.

Of course, a pronoun cannot always be omitted without changing the meaning of a sentence.

Another solution is to omit troublesome pronouns by using the imperative **mood**.

- Submit all ~~Everyone must submit his or her~~ expense report s by Monday.

headers and footers

A *header* in a **formal report** or other document appears at the top of each page, and a *footer* appears at the bottom of each page. Although the information included in headers and footers varies greatly from one organization to the next, the header and footer shown in Figure H–1 are fairly typical.

Headers or footers should include at least the page number but may also include the document title, the topic (or subtopic) of a section, the date of the document, the names of the author or recipients, and other

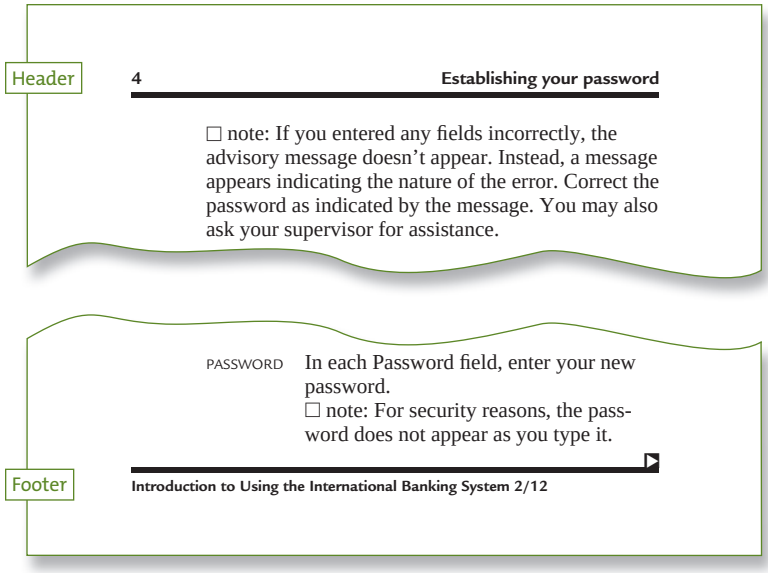

Header
4
Establishing your password
☐ note: If you entered any fields incorrectly, the advisory message doesn't appear. Instead, a message appears indicating the nature of the error. Correct the password as indicated by the message. You may also ask your supervisor for assistance.
PASSWORD
In each Password field, enter your new password.
☐ note: For security reasons, the password does not appear as you type it.
Footer
Introduction to Using the International Banking System 2/12

FIGURE H–1. Header and Footer

identifying information to help **readers** keep track of where they are in the document. Keep your headers and footers concise because too much information in them can create visual clutter. For examples of headers used in correspondence, see **letters** and **memos**. See also **layout and design**.

headings

Headings (also called *heads*) are titles or subtitles that highlight the main topics and signal topic changes within the body of a document. Headings help **readers** find information and divide the material into comprehensible segments. A **formal report** or **proposal** may need several levels of headings (as shown in Figure H–2) to indicate major divisions, subdivisions, and even smaller units. If possible, avoid using more than four levels of headings. See also **layout and design**.

Headings typically represent the major topics of a document. In a short document, you can use the major divisions of your outline as headings; in a longer document, you may need to use both major and minor divisions.

ENGINEERING AND MANUFACTURING PLANT LOCATION REPORT

First-level head

The committee initially considered 30 possible locations for the proposed new engineering and manufacturing plant. Of these, 20 were eliminated almost immediately for one reason or another (unfavorable zoning regulations, inadequate transportation infrastructure, etc.). Of the remaining ten locations, the committee selected for intensive study the three that seemed most promising: Chicago, Minneapolis, and Salt Lake City. We have now visited these three cities, and our observations and recommendations follow.

CHICAGO

Second-level head

Of the three cities, Chicago presently seems to the committee to offer the greatest advantages, although we wish to examine these more carefully before making a final recommendation.

Selected Location

Third-level head

Though not at the geographic center of the United States, Chicago is the demographic center to more than three-quarters of the U.S. population. It is within easy reach of our corporate headquarters in New York. And it is close to several of our most important suppliers of components and raw materials—those, for example, in Columbus, Detroit, and St. Louis. Several factors were considered essential to the location, although some may not have had as great an impact on the selection. . . .

Fourth-level heads

Air Transportation. Chicago has two major airports (O'Hare and Midway) and is contemplating building a third. Both domestic and international air-cargo service are available. . . .

Sea Transportation. Except during the winter months when the Great Lakes are frozen, Chicago is an international seaport. . . .

Rail Transportation. Chicago is served by the following major railroads. . . .

FIGURE H–2. Headings Used in a Document

General Heading Style

No one format for headings is correct. Often an organization settles on a standard format, which everyone in that organization follows. Sometimes a client for whom a report or proposal is being prepared requires a particular format. In the absence of specific guidelines, follow the system illustrated in Figure H–2.

Decimal Numbering System

The decimal numbering system uses a combination of numbers and decimal points to differentiate among levels of headings. Some documents, such as **specifications**, benefit from the decimal numbering system for ease of cross-referencing sections. The following example shows the correspondence between different levels of headings and the decimal numbers used:

1. FIRST-LEVEL HEADING
   - 1.1 Second-level heading
   - 1.2 Second-level heading
     - 1.2.1 Third-level heading
     - 1.2.2 Third-level heading
       - 1.2.2.1 Fourth-level heading
       - 1.2.2.2 Fourth-level heading
   - 1.3 Second-level heading
2. FIRST-LEVEL HEADING

Although decimal headings are indented in an outline or a **table of contents**, they are flush with the left margins when they function as headings in the body of a report. Every heading starts on a new line, with an extra line of space above and below the heading.

WRITER'S CHECKLIST Using Headings

- ✔ Use headings to signal a new topic. Use a lower-level heading to indicate a new subtopic within the larger topic.
- ✔ Make headings concise but specific enough to be informative, as in Figure H–2.
- ✔ Avoid too many or too few headings or levels of headings; too many clutter a document, and too few fail to provide recognizable structure.
- ✔ Ensure that headings at the same level are of relatively equal importance and have **parallel structure**.
- ✔ Subdivide sections only as needed; when you do, try to subdivide them into at least two lower-level headings.
- ✔ Do not leave a heading as the final line of a page. If two lines of text cannot fit below a heading, start the section at the top of the next page.
- ✔ Do not allow a heading to substitute for discussion; the text should read as if the heading were not there.

hyphens

DIRECTORY

Hyphens with Compound Words 255
Hyphens with Modifiers 255
Hyphens with Prefixes and Suffixes 256
Hyphens and Clarity 256
Other Uses of the Hyphen 256
Writer's Checklist: Using Hyphens to Divide Words 257

The hyphen (-) is used primarily for linking and separating words and parts of words. The hyphen often improves the **clarity** of writing. The hyphen is sometimes confused with the **dash**, which is longer and has many other functions.

Hyphens with Compound Words

Some **compound words** are formed with hyphens (*able-bodied*, *over-the-counter*). Hyphens are also used with multiword **numbers** from twenty-one through ninety-nine and fractions when they are written out (*three-quarters*). Most current **dictionaries** indicate whether compound words are hyphenated, written as one word, or written as separate words.

Hyphens with Modifiers

Two- and three-word **modifiers** that express a single thought are hyphenated when they precede a **noun**.

- It was a *well-written* report.

However, a modifying phrase is not hyphenated when it follows the noun it modifies.

- The report was *well written*.

If each of the words can modify the noun without the aid of the other modifying word or words, do not use a hyphen (a *new laser* printer). If the first word is an **adverb** ending in *-ly*, do not use a hyphen (a *privately held* company). A hyphen is always used as part of a letter or number modifier (*A-frame house*, *22-inch screen*).

In a series of unit modifiers that all have the same term following the hyphen, the term following the hyphen need not be repeated throughout the series; for greater smoothness and brevity, use the term only at the end of the series.

- The third-, fourth-, and fifth-floor laboratories were inspected.

Hyphens with Prefixes and Suffixes

A hyphen is used with a **prefix** when the root word is a proper noun (*pre-Columbian*, *anti-American*, *post-Newtonian*). A hyphen may be used when the prefix ends and the root word begins with the same vowel (*re-enter*, *anti-inflammatory*). A hyphen is used when *ex-* means "former" (*ex-president*, *ex-spouse*). A hyphen may be used to emphasize a prefix. ("He is *anti-change*.") The **suffix** *-elect* is hyphenated (*president-elect*).

Hyphens and Clarity

The presence or absence of a hyphen can alter the meaning of a sentence.

AMBIGUOUS We need a biological waste management system.

That sentence could mean one of two things: (1) We need a system to manage "biological waste," or (2) We need a "biological" system to manage waste.

CLEAR We need a *biological-waste* management system. [1]

CLEAR We need a biological *waste-management* system. [2]

To avoid confusion, some words and modifiers should always be hyphenated. *Re-cover* does not mean the same thing as *recover*, for example; the same is true of *re-sign* and *resign* and *un-ionized* and *unionized*.

Other Uses of the Hyphen

Hyphens are used between letters showing how a word is spelled.

- In his e-mail, he misspelled *believed* as b-e-l-e-i-v-e-d.

A hyphen can stand for *to* or *through* between letters and numbers (*pages 44-46*, *the Detroit-Toledo Expressway*, *A-L and M-Z*).

Hyphens are commonly used in telephone numbers (*800-555-1212*), Web addresses (*computer-parts.com*), file names (*report-09.doc*), and similar number/symbol combinations. See also **dates**.

WRITER'S CHECKLIST **Using Hyphens to Divide Words**

- ✔ Do not divide one-syllable words.
- ✔ Divide words at syllable breaks, which you can determine with a dictionary.
- ✔ Do not divide a word if only one letter would remain at the end of a line or if fewer than three letters would start a new line.
- ✔ Do not divide a word at the end of a page; carry it over to the next page.
- ✔ If a word already has a hyphen in its spelling, divide the word at the existing hyphen.
- ✔ Do not use a hyphen to break a URL or an e-mail address at the end of a line because it may confuse readers who could assume that the hyphen is part of the address.

idioms

An idiom is a group of words that has a special meaning apart from its literal meaning. Someone who "runs for office" in the United States, for example, need not be an athlete. The same candidate would "stand for office" in the United Kingdom. Because such expressions are specific to a culture, nonnative speakers must memorize them.

Idioms are often constructed with **prepositions** that follow **adjectives** (*similar to*), **nouns** (*need for*), and **verbs** (*approve of*). Some idioms can change meaning slightly with the preposition used, as in *agree to* ("consent") and *agree with* ("in accord"). The following are typical idioms that give nonnative speakers trouble.

call off [cancel]
call on [visit a client]
cross out [draw a line through]
drop in on [visit unexpectedly]
figure out [solve a problem]
find out [discover information]
get through with [finish]
give up [quit]
hand in [submit]
hand out [distribute]
keep on [continue]
look up [research a subject]
put off [postpone]
run into [meet by chance]
run out of [deplete supply]
watch out for [be careful]

Idioms often provide helpful shortcuts. In fact, they can make writing more natural and lively. Avoid them, however, if your writing is to be translated into another language or read in other English-speaking countries. Because no language system can fully explain such usages, a reader must check **dictionaries** or usage guides to interpret the meaning of idioms. See also **English as a second language** and **international correspondence**.

WEB LINK	Prepositional Idioms
For links to helpful lists of common pairings of prepositions with nouns, verbs, and adjectives, see ***bedfordstmartins.com/alred*** and select *Links for Handbook Entries*.	

illegal / illicit

If something is *illegal*, it is prohibited by law. If something is *illicit*, it is prohibited by either law or custom. *Illicit* behavior may or may not be *illegal*, but it does violate social convention or moral codes and therefore usually has a clandestine or immoral **connotation**. ("The employee's *illicit* sexual behavior caused a scandal, but the company's attorney concluded that no *illegal* acts were committed.")

illustrations (*see* visuals)

imply / infer

If you *imply* something, you hint at or suggest it. ("Her e-mail *implied* that the project would be delayed.") If you *infer* something, you reach a conclusion based on evidence or interpretation. ("The manager *inferred* from the e-mail that the project would be delayed.")

in / into

In means "inside of"; *into* implies movement from the outside to the inside. ("The equipment was *in* the test chamber, so she reached *into* the chamber to adjust it.")

in order to

Most often, *in order to* is a meaningless filler phrase that is dropped into a sentence without thought. See also **conciseness**.

- To ~~In order to~~ start the engine, open the choke and throttle and then press the starter.

However, the phrase *in order to* is sometimes essential to the meaning of a sentence.

- If the vertical scale of a graph line would not normally show the zero point, use a horizontal break in the graph *in order to* include the zero point.

In order to also helps control the **pace** of a sentence, even when it is not essential to the meaning of the sentence.

- The committee must know the estimated costs *in order to* evaluate the feasibility of the project.

in terms of

When used to indicate a shift from one kind of language or terminology to another, the phrase *in terms of* can be useful.

- *In terms of* gross sales, the year has been relatively successful; however, *in terms of* net income, it has been discouraging.

When simply dropped into a sentence because it easily comes to mind, *in terms of* is meaningless **affectation**. See also **conciseness**.

- She was thinking ~~in terms~~ of subcontracting much of the work.

indexing

An index is an alphabetical list of all the major topics and sometimes subtopics in a written work. It cites the pages where each topic can be found and allows **readers** to find information on particular topics quickly and easily, as shown in Figure I–1. The index always comes at the very end of the work. Many Web sites also provide linked subject indexes to the content of the sites.

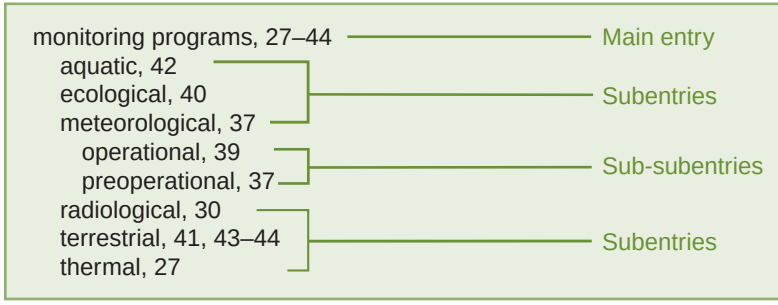


FIGURE I–1. Index Entry (with Main Entry, Subentries, and Sub-subentries)

The key to compiling a useful index is selectivity. Instead of listing every possible reference to a topic, select references to passages where the topic is discussed fully or where a significant point is made about it. For index entries like those in Figure I–1, choose key terms that best represent a topic. Key terms are those words or phrases that a reader would most likely look for in an index. For example, the key terms in a reference to the development of legislation about **environmental impact statements** would probably be *legislation* and *environmental impact statement*, not *development*. In selecting terms for index entries, use chapter or section titles only if they include such key terms. For index entries on **tables** and **visuals**, use the words from their titles that will function as key terms a reader might seek. Create alphabetical Web-site indexes from links to topics in subsites throughout the larger site.

Compiling an Index

Do not attempt to compile an index until the final manuscript is completed because terminology and page numbers will not be accurate before then. The best way to manually compile a list of topics is to read through your written work from the beginning; each time a key term appears in a significant context, note the term and its page number. An index entry can consist solely of a main entry and its page number.

- aquatic monitoring programs, 42

An index entry can also include a main entry, subentries, and even sub-subentries, as shown in Figure I–1. A subentry indicates the pages where a specific subcategory or subdivision of the main topic can be found. When you have compiled a list of key terms for the entire work, sort the main entries alphabetically, then sort all subentries and sub-subentries alphabetically beneath their main entries. To help indexers with this process, the American Society of Indexers lists software available for indexing at its Web site, *www.asindexing.org*.

Wording Index Entries

The first word of an index entry should be the principal word because the reader will look for topics alphabetically by their main words. Selecting the right word to list first is easier for some topics than for others. For instance, *tips on repairing electrical wire* would not be a suitable index entry because a reader looking for information on electrical wire would not look under the word *tips*. Ordinarily, an entry with two keywords, such as *electrical wire*, should be indexed under each word (*electrical wire* and *wire*, *electrical*). A main index entry should be written as a **noun** or a noun **phrase** rather than as an **adjective** alone or a **verb**.

- electrical wire, 20–22
  - grounding, 21
  - insulation, 20
  - repairing, 22
  - size, 21

DIGITAL TIP

Creating an Index

You can make your long documents more reader-friendly by adding an index. Most word-processing programs include tools that provide a quick and efficient way to create an alphabetical subject index of your document. The index generated by your word-processing software will still need careful review, but using the software to create the first draft can save time. If you need to index a highly complex document, you may want to consider specialized indexing software designed for use by professional indexers and publishers. For a list of indexing tools and instructions on creating a standard index, go to ***bedfordstmartins.com/alred*** and select *Digital Tips*, "Creating an Index."

Cross-Referencing

Cross-references in an index help readers find other related topics in the text. A reader looking up *technical writing*, for example, might find cross-references to *report* or *manual*. Cross-references do not include page numbers; they merely direct readers to another main index entry where they can find page numbers. The two kinds of cross-references are *see* references and *see also* references.

See references are most commonly used with topics that can be identified by several different terms. Listing the topic page numbers by only one of the terms, the indexer then lists the other terms throughout the index as *see* references.

- economic costs. *See* benefit-cost analyses

See references also direct readers to index entries where a topic is listed as a subentry.

- L-shaped fittings. *See* elbows, L-shaped fittings

See also references indicate other entries that include additional information on a topic.

- ecological programs, 40–49. *See also* monitoring programs

WRITER'S CHECKLIST **Indexing**

- ✔ Use lowercase for the first words and all subsequent words of main entries, subentries, and sub-subentries unless they are proper nouns or would otherwise be capitalized. See **capitalization**.
- ✔ Use italics for the cross-reference terms *see* and *see also*.
- ✔ Place each subentry in the index on a separate line, indented from its main entry. Indent sub-subentries from the preceding subentry. Indentations allow readers to scan a column quickly for pertinent subentries or sub-subentries.
- ✔ Separate entries from page numbers with commas.
- ✔ Format the index economically with double columns, as is done in the index to this book.

indiscreet / indiscrete

Indiscreet means "lacking in prudence or sound judgment." ("His public discussion of the proposed merger was *indiscreet*.") *Indiscrete* means "not divided or divisible into parts." ("The separate departments, once combined, become *indiscrete*.") See also **discreet / discrete**.

inquiries and responses

The purpose of writing inquiry **letters** or **e-mail** messages is to obtain responses to requests or specific questions, as in Figure I–2, which shows a college student's request for information from an official at a power company. Inquiries may benefit either the reader (as in requests for information about a product that a company has advertised) or the writer (as in the student's inquiry in Figure I–2). Inquiries that primarily benefit the writer require the use of **persuasion** and special consideration of the needs of your **audience**. See also **correspondence**.

Writing Inquiries

Inquiries need to be specific, clear, and concise in order to receive a prompt, helpful reply.

Dear Ms. Metcalf:

I am an architecture student at the University of Dayton, and I am working with a team of students to design an energy-efficient house for a class project. I am writing to request information on heating systems based on the specifications of our design. To meet our deadline, we would appreciate any information you could provide by November 16.

The house we are designing contains 2,000 square feet of living space (17,600 cubic feet) and meets all the requirements in your brochure "Insulating for Efficiency." We need the following information, based on the southern Ohio climate:

- The proper-size heat pump for such a home.
- The wattage of the supplemental electrical heating units required.
- The estimated power consumption and rates for those units for one year.

We will be happy to send you our preliminary design report. If you have questions or suggestions, contact me at kparsons@fly.ud.edu or call 513-229-4598.

Thank you for your help.

FIGURE I–2. Inquiry

- Phrase your request so that the reader will immediately know the type of information you are seeking, why you need it, and how you will use it.
- If possible, present questions in a numbered or bulleted **list** to make it easy for your reader to respond to them.
- Keep the number of questions to a minimum to improve your chances of receiving a prompt response.
- Offer some inducement for the reader to respond, such as promising to share the results of what you are doing. See also **"you" viewpoint**.
- Promise to keep responses confidential, when appropriate.
- Provide a date by which you need a response.

In the closing, thank the reader for taking the time to respond. In addition, make it convenient for the recipient to respond by providing your

contact information, such as a phone number or an e-mail address, as shown in Figure I–2.

Responding to Inquiries

When you receive an inquiry, determine whether you have both the information and the authority to respond. If you are the right person in your organization to respond and you understand your organization's policy about the issue, answer as promptly as you can, and be sure to answer every inquiry or question asked, as shown in Figure I–3. How long and how detailed your response should be depends on the nature of the question and the information the writer provides.

If you have received an inquiry that you feel you cannot answer, find out who can and forward the inquiry to that person. Notify the writer that you have forwarded the inquiry. The person who replies to a forwarded inquiry should state in the first paragraph of the response who has forwarded the original inquiry, as shown in Figure I–3.

Dear Ms. Parsons:

Jane Metcalf forwarded to me your October 12 inquiry about the house that your architecture team is designing. I can estimate the heating requirements of a typical home of 17,600 cubic feet as follows:

- For such a home, we would generally recommend a heat pump capable of delivering 40,000 BTUs, such as our model AL-42 (17 kilowatts).
- With the AL-42's efficiency, you don't need supplemental heating units.
- Depending on usage, the AL-42 unit averages between 1,000 and 1,500 kilowatt-hours from December through March. To determine the current rate for such usage, check with Dayton Power and Light Company.

I can give you an answer that would apply specifically to your house based on its particular design (such as number of stories, windows, and entrances). If you send me more details, I will be happy to provide more precise figures for your interesting project.

Sincerely,

FIGURE I–3. Response to an Inquiry

inside / inside of

In the phrase *inside of*, the word *of* is redundant and should be omitted.

- The switch is just inside ~~of~~ the door.

Using *inside of* to mean "in less time than" is colloquial and should be avoided in writing.

- They were finished ~~inside of~~ *in less than* an hour.

insoluble / insolvable

The words *insoluble* and *insolvable* are sometimes used interchangeably to mean "incapable of being solved." *Insoluble* also means "incapable of being dissolved."

- Until yesterday, the production problem seemed *insolvable*.
- *Insoluble* fiber passes through the intestines largely intact.

instant messaging

Instant messaging (IM) is a text-based communications medium that fills a niche between the telephone and **e-mail**. It allows both real-time communications, like a phone call, and the transfer of text or other files, like an e-mail. It is especially useful to those who are working at sites without access to e-mail. See also **selecting the medium**.

To set up routine IM exchanges, add to your contact list the user names of those with whom you regularly exchange messages. Choose a screen name that your colleagues will recognize. If you use IM routinely as part of your job, create an "away" message that signals when you are not available for IM interactions.

When writing instant messages, keep them simple and to the point, covering only one subject in each message to prevent confusion and inappropriate responses. Because screen space is often limited and speed is essential, many who send instant messages use abbreviations and shortened spellings ("u" for "you"). Be sure that your **reader** will understand such abbreviations; when in doubt, avoid them.*

*Many online sites, such as *www.netlingo.com*, define IM and other such abbreviations.

In Figure I–4, the manager of a software development company in Maine ("Diane") is exchanging instant messages with a business partner in the Netherlands ("Andre"). Notice that the correspondents use an informal style that includes personal and professional abbreviations with which both are familiar ("NP" for "no problem"; and "QSG" for Quick Start Guide). These messages demonstrate how IM can not only help people exchange information quickly but also build rapport among distant colleagues and team members. The exchange also demonstrates why IM is not generally appropriate for many complex messages or for more formal circumstances, such as when establishing new professional relationships.

❖ ETHICS NOTE Be sure to follow your employer's IM policies, such as any limitations on sending personal messages during work hours or requirements concerning confidentiality. If no specific policy exists, assume that personal use of IM is not appropriate in your workplace. ❖

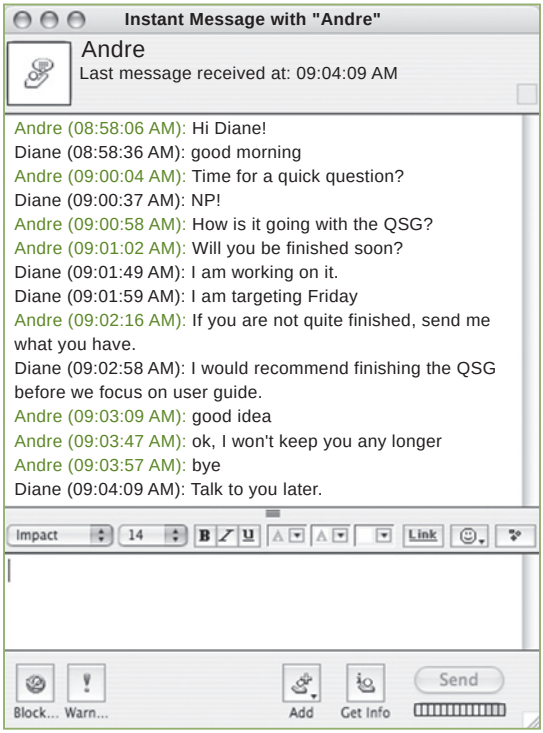

Instant Message with "Andre"
Andre
Last message received at: 09:04:09 AM
Andre (08:58:06 AM): Hi Diane!
Diane (08:58:36 AM): good morning
Andre (09:00:04 AM): Time for a quick question?
Diane (09:00:37 AM): NP!
Andre (09:00:58 AM): How is it going with the QSG?
Andre (09:01:02 AM): Will you be finished soon?
Diane (09:01:49 AM): I am working on it.
Diane (09:01:59 AM): I am targeting Friday
Andre (09:02:16 AM): If you are not quite finished, send me what you have.
Diane (09:02:58 AM): I would recommend finishing the QSG before we focus on user guide.
Andre (09:03:09 AM): good idea
Andre (09:03:47 AM): ok, I won't keep you any longer
Andre (09:03:57 AM): bye
Diane (09:04:09 AM): Talk to you later.
Impact
14
Link
Block...
Warn...
Add
Get Info
Send

FIGURE I–4. Instant-Message Exchange

WRITER'S CHECKLIST **Instant Messaging Privacy and Security**

- ✔ Restrict contact lists on professional IM accounts to business associates to avoid inadvertently sending a personal message to an associate.
- ✔ Learn the options, capabilities, and security limitations of your IM system and set the preferences that best suit your use of the system.
- ✔ Be especially alert to the possibilities of virus infections and security risks with messages, attachments, and contact lists.
- ✔ Save significant IM exchanges (or logs) for your future reference.
- ✔ Be aware that instant messages can be saved by your recipients and may be archived by your employer. (See the Professionalism Note on page 164.)
- ✔ Do not use professional IM for office gossip or inappropriate exchanges.

instructions

Instructions that are clear and easy to follow prevent miscommunication and help **readers** complete tasks effectively and safely. To write effective instructions, you must thoroughly understand the process, system, or device you are describing. Often, you must observe someone as he or she completes a task and perform the steps yourself before you begin to write. Finally, keep in mind that the most effective instructions often combine written elements and **visuals** that reinforce each other. See also **manuals**.

Writing Instructions

Consider your audience's level of knowledge. If all your readers have good backgrounds in the topic, you can use fairly specialized terms. If that is not the case, use **plain language** or include a **glossary** for specialized terms that you cannot avoid. See also **audience**.

Clear and easy-to-follow instructions are written as commands in the imperative **mood**, active **voice**, and (whenever possible) present **tense**.

Raise the
▸ ~~The~~ access lid ~~will be raised by the operator.~~

Although **conciseness** is important in instructions, **clarity** is essential. You can make sentences shorter by leaving out some **articles** (*a*, *an*, *the*), some **pronouns** (*you*, *this*, *these*), and some **verbs**, but such sentences may result in **telegraphic style** and be harder to understand. For example, the first version of the following instruction for placing a document in a scanner tray is confusing.

CONFUSING	Place document in tray with printed side facing opposite.
CLEAR	Place the document in the document tray with the printed side facing away from you.

One good way to make instructions easy to follow is to divide them into short, simple steps in their proper sequence. Steps can be organized with words (*first*, *next*, *finally*) that indicate time or sequence.

- *First*, determine the problem the customer is having with the computer. *Next*, observe the system in operation. *At that time*, question the operator until you are sure that the problem has been explained completely. *Then* analyze the problem and make any necessary adjustments.

You can also use numbers, as in the following:

- 1. Connect each black cable wire to a brass terminal.
  2. Attach one 4-inch green jumper wire to the back.
  3. Connect the jumper wire to the bare cable wire.

Consider using the numbered- or bulleted-list feature of your word-processing software to create sequenced steps. See **lists**.

Plan ahead for your reader. If the instructions in step 2 will affect a process in step 9, say so in step 2. Sometimes your instructions have to make clear that two operations must be performed simultaneously. Either state that fact in an **introduction** to the specific instructions or include both operations in one step.

CONFUSING	1. Hold down the CONTROL key. 2. Press the RETURN key before releasing the CONTROL key.
CLEAR	1. While holding down the CONTROL key, press the RETURN key.

If your instructions involve many steps, break them into stages, each with a separate heading so that each stage begins again with step 1.

Using **headings** as dividers is especially important if your reader is likely to be performing the operation as he or she reads the instructions.

Illustrating Instructions

Illustrations should be developed together with the text, especially for complex instructions that benefit from visuals that foster **clarity** and conciseness. Such visuals as **drawings**, **flowcharts**, **maps**, and **photographs** enable your reader to identify relationships more easily than do long explanations. Some instructions, such as those for products sold internationally, use only visuals. The entry **global graphics** describes visuals that avoid culture-specific connotations and are often used in such instructions.

Consider the **layout and design** of your instructions to most effectively integrate visuals. Highlight important visuals as well as text by making them stand out from the surrounding text. Consider using boxes and boldface or distinctive headings. Experiment with font style, size, and color to determine which devices are most effective.

The instructions in Figure I–5 guide the reader through the steps of streaking a saucer-sized disk of material (called *agar*) used to grow bacteria colonies. The purpose is to thin out the original specimen (the *inoculum*) so that the bacteria will grow in small, isolated colonies. This section could be part of other larger instructional documents for which streaking is only one step among others.

WEB LINK	Writing Instructions
For links to additional advice on writing instructions and models, see *bedfordstmartins.com/alred* and select *Links for Handbook Entries*.	

Warning Readers

Alert your readers to any potentially hazardous materials (or actions) before they reach the step for which the material is needed. Caution readers handling hazardous materials about any requirements for special clothing, tools, equipment, and other safety measures. Highlight warnings, cautions, and precautions to make them stand out visually from the surrounding text. Present warning notices in a box, in all uppercase letters, in large and distinctive fonts, or in color. Experiment with font style, size, and color to determine which devices are most effective.

Figure I–6 shows a warning from an instruction manual for the use of a gas grill. Notice that a drawing supports the text of the warning.

Various standards organizations and agencies publish guidelines on the use of terminology, colors, and symbols in instructions and labeling.

STREAKING AN AGAR PLATE

Distribute the inoculum over the surface of the agar in the following manner:

1. Beginning at one edge of the saucer, thin the inoculum by streaking back and forth over the same area several times, sweeping across the agar surface until approximately one-quarter of the surface has been covered. *Sterilize the loop in an open flame.*
2. Streak at right angles to the originally inoculated area, carrying the inoculum out from the streaked areas onto the sterile surface with only the first stroke of the wire. Cover half of the remaining sterile agar surface. *Sterilize the loop.*
3. Repeat as described in Step 2, covering the remaining sterile agar surface.

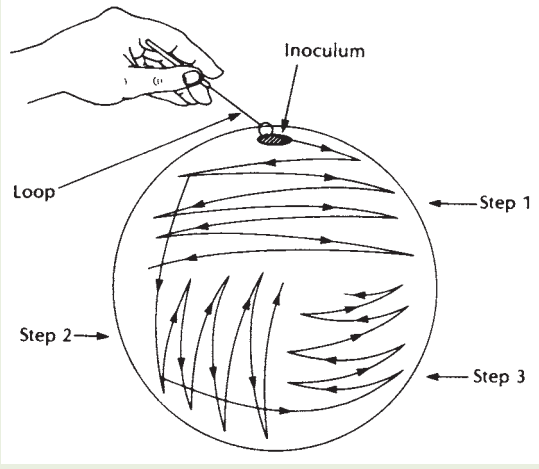


FIGURE I–5. Illustrated Instructions

Two widely influential organizations that publish such guidelines are the American National Standards Institute (*www.ansi.org*) and the International Organization for Standardization (*www.iso.org*).

Testing Instructions

To test the accuracy and clarity of your instructions, ask someone who is not familiar with the task to follow your directions. A first-time user can spot missing steps or point out passages that should be worded

WARNING

- The assembler/owner is responsible for the assembly, installation, and maintenance of the grill.
- Use the grill outdoors only.
- Do not let children operate or play near your grill.
- Keep the grill area clear and free from materials that burn, gasoline, bottled gas in any form, and other flammable vapors and liquids.
- Do not block holes in bottom and back of grill.
- Visually check burner flames on a regular basis.
- Use the grill in a well-ventilated space. Never use in an enclosed space, carport, garage, porch, patio, or building made of combustible construction, or under overhead construction.
- Do not install your grill in or on recreational vehicles and/or boats.
- Keep grills a distance of 3 ft. (approximately 1 m), from buildings to reduce the possibility of fire or heat damage to materials.

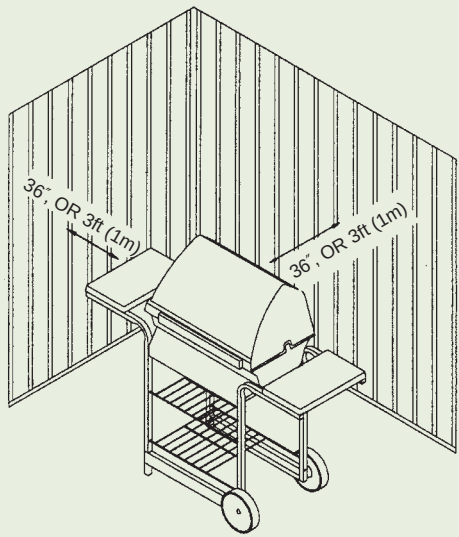


FIGURE I–6. Warning in a Set of Instructions

more clearly. As you observe your tester, note any steps that seem especially confusing and revise accordingly. See **usability testing**.

WRITER'S CHECKLIST **Writing Instructions**

- ✔ Use the imperative mood and the active voice.
- ✔ Use short sentences and simple present tense as much as possible.
- ✔ Avoid technical terminology and **jargon** that your readers might not know, including undefined **abbreviations**.
- ✔ Do not use elegant variation (two different words for the same thing). See also **affectation**.
- ✔ Eliminate any **ambiguity**.
- ✔ Use effective visuals and highlighting devices.
- ✔ Include appropriate warnings and cautions.
- ✔ Verify that measurements, distances, times, and relationships are precise and accurate.
- ✔ Test your instructions by having someone else follow them while you observe.

insure / ensure / assure

Insure, *ensure*, and *assure* all mean "make secure or certain." *Assure* refers to people, and it alone has the connotation of setting a person's mind at rest. ("I *assure* you that the equipment will be available.") *Ensure* and *insure* mean "make secure from harm." Only *insure* is widely used in the sense of guaranteeing the value of life or property.

- ▸ We need all the data to *ensure* the success of the project.
- ▸ We should *insure* the contents of the warehouse.

intensifiers

Intensifiers are **adverbs** that **emphasize** degree, such as *very*, *quite*, *rather*, *such*, and *too*. Although intensifiers serve a legitimate and necessary function, unnecessary intensifiers can weaken your writing.

Eliminate those that do not make an obvious contribution or replace them with specific details.

- The team learned the ~~very~~ good news that it had been awarded *$10,000*
  a ~~rather substantial monetary~~ prize for its design.

Some words (such as *perfect*, *impossible*, and *final*) do not logically permit intensification because, by definition, they do not allow degrees of comparison. Although **usage** often ignores that logical restriction, avoid such comparisons in technical writing. See also **adjectives**, **conciseness**, and **equal / unique / perfect**.

interface

An *interface* is a surface that provides a common boundary between two bodies or areas. The bodies or areas may be physical ("the *interface* of a piston and a cylinder") or conceptual ("the *interface* of mathematics and economics"). Do not use *interface* as a substitute for the verbs *cooperate*, *interact*, or even *work*. See **affectation** and **buzzwords**.

interjections

An interjection is a word or phrase standing alone or inserted into a sentence to exclaim or to command attention. Grammatically, it has no connection to the sentence. An interjection can be strong (*Hey! Ouch! Wow!*) or mild (*oh*, *well*, *indeed*). A strong interjection is followed by an **exclamation mark**.

- *Wow!* Profits more than doubled last quarter.

A weak interjection is followed by a **comma**.

- *Well,* we need to rethink the proposal.

An interjection inserted into a sentence usually requires a comma before it and after it.

- We must, *indeed,* rethink the proposal.

Because they get their main expressive force from sound, interjections are more common in speech than in writing. Use them sparingly.

international correspondence

Business **correspondence** varies among national cultures. Organizational patterns, persuasive strategies, forms of courtesy, formality, and ideas about efficiency differ from country to country. For example, in the United States, direct, concise correspondence usually demonstrates courtesy by not wasting the reader's time. In many other countries, however, such directness and brevity may seem rude to **readers**, suggesting that the writer is dismissive or lacking in manners. (See **audience** and **tone**.) Likewise, where a U.S. writer might consider one brief **letter** or **e-mail** sufficient to communicate a request, a writer in another country may expect an exchange of three or four longer letters to pave the way for action.

Cultural Differences in Correspondence

When you read correspondence from businesspeople in other cultures or countries, be alert to differences in such features as customary expressions, openings, and closings. Japanese business writers, for example, traditionally use indirect openings that reflect on the season, compliment the reader's success, or offer hopes for the reader's continued prosperity. Consider deeper issues as well, such as how writers from other cultures express bad news. Japanese writers traditionally express negative messages, such as **refusal letters**, indirectly to avoid embarrassing the recipient. Such cultural differences are often based on perceptions of time, face-saving, and traditions. The features and communication styles of specific national cultures are complex; the entry **global communication** provides information and resources for cross-cultural study. See also **global graphics**.

Cross-Cultural Examples

Figures I–7 and I–8 are a draft and a final version of a letter written by an American businessman to a Japanese businessman. The opening and closing of the draft in Figure I–7 do not include enough of the politeness strategies that are important in Japanese culture, and the informal salutation inappropriately uses the recipient's first name (*Dear Ichiro:*). This draft also contains **idioms** (*looking forward*, *company family*), **jargon** (*transport will be holding*), **contractions** (*I'm*, *don't*), informal language (*just e-mail or fax*, *Cheers*), and humor and allusion (*"ptomaine palace" across from our main offices*).

Compare that letter to the one in Figure I–8, which is written in language that is courteous, literal, and specific. This revised letter begins with concern about the recipient's family and prosperity because that opening honors traditional Japanese patterns in business correspondence. The

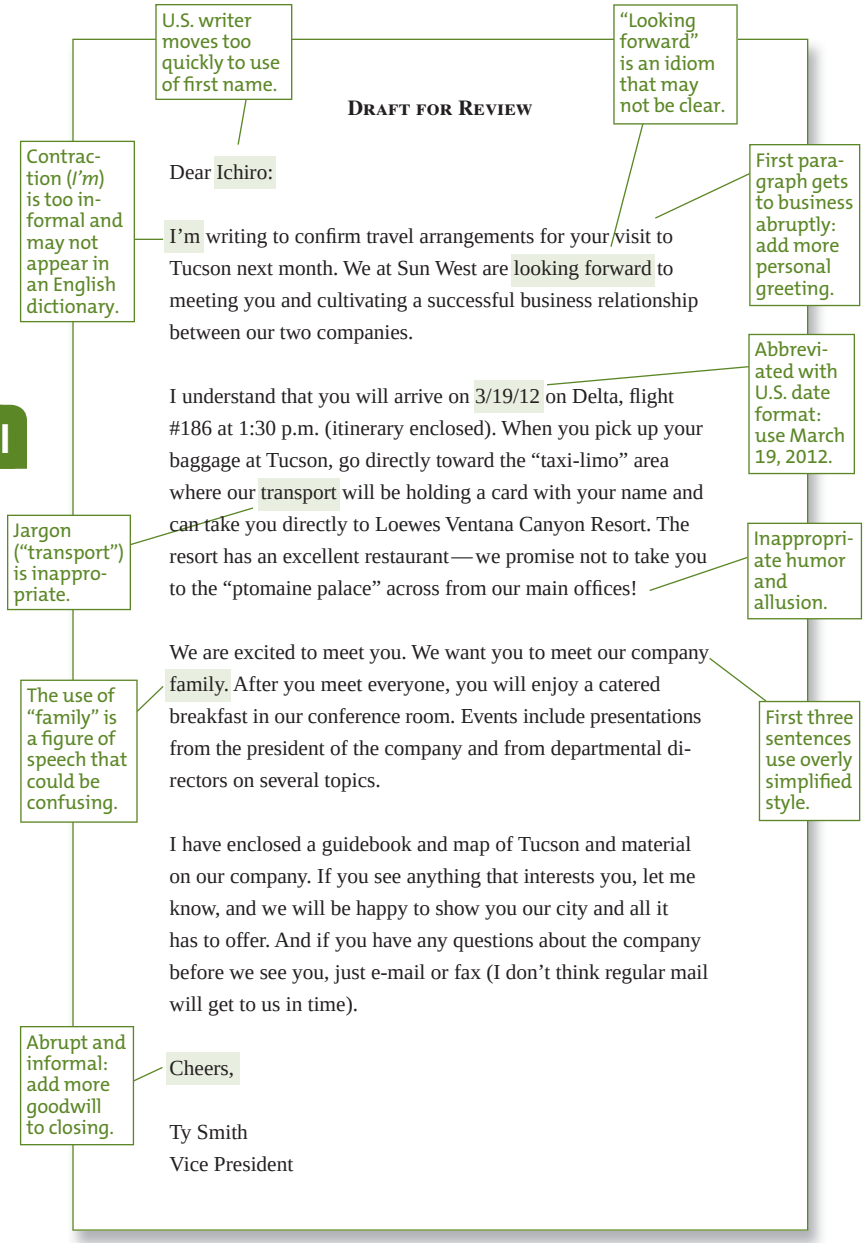

U.S. writer moves too quickly to use of first name.
"Looking forward" is an idiom that may not be clear.
DRAFT FOR REVIEW
Contraction (I'm) is too informal and may not appear in an English dictionary.
First paragraph gets to business abruptly: add more personal greeting.
Dear Ichiro:
I'm writing to confirm travel arrangements for your visit to Tucson next month. We at Sun West are looking forward to meeting you and cultivating a successful business relationship between our two companies.
Abbreviated with U.S. date format: use March 19, 2012.
I understand that you will arrive on 3/19/12 on Delta, flight #186 at 1:30 p.m. (itinerary enclosed). When you pick up your baggage at Tucson, go directly toward the "taxi-limo" area where our transport will be holding a card with your name and can take you directly to Loewes Ventana Canyon Resort. The resort has an excellent restaurant—we promise not to take you to the "ptomaine palace" across from our main offices!
Jargon ("transport") is inappropriate.
Inappropriate humor and allusion.
We are excited to meet you. We want you to meet our company family. After you meet everyone, you will enjoy a catered breakfast in our conference room. Events include presentations from the president of the company and from departmental directors on several topics.
The use of "family" is a figure of speech that could be confusing.
First three sentences use overly simplified style.
I have enclosed a guidebook and map of Tucson and material on our company. If you see anything that interests you, let me know, and we will be happy to show you our city and all it has to offer. And if you have any questions about the company before we see you, just e-mail or fax (I don't think regular mail will get to us in time).
Abrupt and informal: add more goodwill to closing.
Cheers,
Ty Smith
Vice President

FIGURE I–7. Inappropriate International Correspondence (Draft Marked for Revision)

Sun West Corporation, Inc.

2565 North Armadillo
Tucson, AZ 85719
Phone: (602) 555-6677
Fax: (602) 555-6678 sunwest.com

March 5, 2012

Ichiro Katsumi
Investment Director
Toshiba Investment Company
1-29-10 Ichiban-cho
Tokyo 105, Japan

Dear Mr. Katsumi:

I hope that you and your family are well and prospering in the new year. We at Sun West Corporation are very pleased that you will be coming to visit us in Tucson this month. It will be a pleasure to meet you, and we are very gratified and honored that you are interested in investing in our company.

So that we can ensure that your stay will be pleasurable, we have taken care of all of your travel arrangements. You will

- Depart Narita–New Tokyo International Airport on Delta Airlines flight #75 at 1700 on March 19, 2012.
- Arrive at Los Angeles International Airport at 1050 local time and depart for Tucson on Delta flight #186 at 1205.
- Arrive at Tucson International Airport at 1330 local time on March 19.
- Depart Tucson International Airport on Delta flight #123 at 1845 on March 26.
- Arrive in Salt Lake City, Utah, at 1040 and depart on Delta flight #34 at 1115.
- Arrive in Portland, Oregon, at 1210 local time and depart on Delta flight #254 at 1305.
- Arrive in Tokyo at 1505 local time on March 27.

If you need additional information about your travel plans or information on Sun West Corporation, please call, fax, or e-mail me directly at tsmith@sunwest.com. That way, we will receive your message in time to make the appropriate changes or additions.

FIGURE I–8. Appropriate International Correspondence

Mr. Ichiro Katsumi 2 March 5, 2012

After you arrive in Tucson, a chauffeur from Skyline Limousines will be waiting for you at Gate 12. He or she will be carrying a card with your name, will help you collect your luggage from the baggage claim area, and will then drive you to the Loewes Ventana Canyon Resort. This resort is one of the most prestigious in Tucson, with spectacular desert views, high-quality amenities, and one of the best golf courses in the city. The next day, the chauffeur will be back at the Ventana at 0900 to drive you to Sun West Corporation.

We at Sun West Corporation are very excited to meet you and introduce you to all the staff members of our hardworking and growing company. After you meet everyone, you will enjoy a catered breakfast in our conference room. At that time, you will receive a schedule of events planned for the remainder of your trip. Events include presentations from the president of the company and from departmental directors on

- The history of Sun West Corporation
- The uniqueness of our products and current success in the marketplace
- Demographic information and the benefits of being located in Tucson
- The potential for considerable profits for both our companies with your company's investment

We encourage you to read through the enclosed guidebook and map of Tucson. In addition to events planned at Sun West Corporation, you will find many natural wonders and historical sites to see in Tucson and in Arizona in general. If you see any particular event or place that you would like to visit, please let us know. We will be happy to show you our city and all it has to offer.

Again, we are very honored that you will be visiting us, and we look forward to a successful business relationship between our two companies.

Sincerely,

Ty Smith

Ty Smith
Vice President

Enclosures (2)

FIGURE I–8. Appropriate International Correspondence (*continued*)

letter is free of slang, idioms, and jargon. The sentences are shorter than in the draft; in addition, bulleted lists break up the paragraphs, contractions are avoided, months are spelled out, and 24-hour-clock time is used.

When writing for international readers, rethink the ingrained habits that define how you express yourself, learn as much as you can about the cultural expectations of others, and focus on politeness strategies that demonstrate your respect for readers. Doing so will help you achieve **clarity** and mutual understanding with international readers.

WEB LINK	Google's International Directory
Google's International Business and Trade Directory provides an excellent starting point for searching the Web for information related to customs, communication, and international standards. See ***bedfordstmartins.com/alred*** and select *Links for Handbook Entries*.	

WRITER'S CHECKLIST **Writing International Correspondence**

- ✔ Observe the guidelines for courtesy, such as those in the *Writer's Checklist: Using Tone to Build Goodwill* in **correspondence** on pages 108–9.
- ✔ Write clear and complete sentences: Unusual word order or rambling sentences will frustrate and confuse readers. See **garbled sentences**.
- ✔ Avoid an overly simplified style that may offend or any **affectation** that may confuse the reader. See also **English as a second language**.
- ✔ Avoid humor, irony, and sarcasm; they are easily misunderstood outside their cultural **context**.
- ✔ Do not use idioms, jargon, slang expressions, unusual **figures of speech**, or **allusions** to events or attitudes particular to American life.
- ✔ Consider whether necessary technical terminology can be found in abbreviated English-language dictionaries; if it cannot, carefully define such terminology.
- ✔ Do not use contractions or **abbreviations** that may not be clear to international readers.
- ✔ Avoid inappropriate informality, such as using first names too quickly.
- ✔ Write out **dates**, whether in the month-day-year style (*June 11, 2012* not *6/11/12*) used in the United States or the day-month-year style (*11 June 2012* not *11/6/12*) used in many other parts of the world.

(*continued*)

WRITER'S CHECKLIST **Writing International Correspondence** (*continued*)

- ✔ Specify time zones or refer to international standards, such as Greenwich Mean Time (GMT) or Coordinated Universal Time (UTC).
- ✔ Use international measurement standards, such as the metric system (*18°C, 14 cm, 45 kg*) where possible.
- ✔ Ask someone from your intended audience's culture or with appropriate expertise to review your draft before you complete your final proofreading.

I

interviewing for information

Interviewing others who have knowledge of your subject is often an essential method of **research** in technical writing. The process of interviewing for information includes determining the proper person to interview, preparing for the interview, conducting the interview, and expanding your notes soon after the interview.

Determining the Proper Person to Interview

Many times, your subject or **purpose** logically points to the proper person to interview for information. For example, if you were writing about using the Web to market a software-development business, you would want to interview someone with extensive experience in Web marketing as well as someone who has built a successful business developing software. The following sources can help you determine the appropriate person to interview: (1) workplace colleagues or faculty in appropriate academic departments; (2) local chapters of professional societies; (3) information from "Contact" or "About Us" links at company or organization Web sites; and (4) targeted Internet searches, such as using relevant domains (.edu, .gov, and .org).

Preparing for the Interview

Before the interview, learn as much as possible about the person you are going to interview and the organization for which he or she works.

◖ PROFESSIONALISM NOTE When you contact the prospective interviewee, explain who you are, why you would like an interview, the subject and purpose of the interview, and generally how much time it will take. You should also ask permission if you plan to record the interview and let your interviewee know that you will allow him or her to review your draft. ◗

After you have made the appointment, prepare a list of questions to ask your interviewee. Avoid vague, general questions. A question such as "Do you think the Web would be useful for you?" is too general to elicit useful information. It is more helpful to ask specific but open-ended questions, such as the following: "Many physicians in your specialty are using the Web to answer routine patient questions. How might providing such information on your Web site affect your relationship with your patients?"

Conducting the Interview

Arrive promptly for the interview and be prepared to guide the discussion. During the interview, take only memory-jogging notes that will help you recall the conversation later; do not ask your interviewee to slow down so that you can take detailed notes. As the interview is reaching a close, take a few minutes to skim your notes and ask the interviewee to clarify anything that is ambiguous.

WRITER'S CHECKLIST **Interviewing Successfully**

- ✔ Be pleasant but purposeful. You are there to get information, so don't be timid about asking leading questions on the subject.
- ✔ Use the list of questions you have prepared, starting with the less-complex and less-difficult aspects of the topic to get the conversation started, and then going on to the more-challenging aspects.
- ✔ Let your interviewee do most of the talking. Remember that the interviewee is the expert. See also **listening**.
- ✔ Be objective. Don't offer your opinions on the subject. You are there to get information, not to debate.
- ✔ Ask additional questions as they arise.
- ✔ Don't get sidetracked. If the interviewee strays too far from the subject, ask a specific question to direct the conversation back on track.
- ✔ If you use an audiocassette or a digital voice recorder, do not let it lure you into relaxing so that you neglect to ask crucial questions.
- ✔ After thanking the interviewee, ask permission to contact him or her again to clarify a point or two as you complete your interview notes.
- ✔ A day or two after the interview, thank the interviewee in a brief letter or message.

Expanding Your Notes Soon After the Interview

Immediately after leaving the interview, use your memory-jogging notes to help you mentally review the interview and expand those notes. Do not postpone this step. No matter how good your memory is, you will

forget some important points if you do not complete this step at once. See also **note-taking**.

Interviewing by Phone or E-mail

When an interviewee is not available for a face-to-face meeting, consider a telephone interview. Most of the principles for conducting face-to-face interviews apply to phone interviews; be aware, however, that phone calls do not offer the important nonverbal cues of face-to-face meetings. Further, taking notes can be challenging while speaking on a phone, although a phone headset or a high-quality speakerphone can alleviate that problem.

As an alternative to a face-to-face or phone interview, consider an **e-mail** interview. Such an "interview," however, lacks the spontaneity and the immediacy of an in-person or a phone conversation. If e-mail is the only option, the interviewing principles in this entry can help you obtain useful responses. Before you send any questions, make sure that your contact is willing to participate and respond to follow-up requests for clarification. As a courtesy, give the respondent a general idea of the number of questions you plan to ask and the level of detail you expect. When you send the questions, ask for a reasonable deadline from the interviewee ("Would you be able to send your response by . . . ?").

interviewing for a job

Job interviews can take place in person, by phone, or by teleconference. They may last 30 minutes, an hour, or several hours. Sometimes an initial job interview is followed by a series of additional interviews that can last a half or full day. Often just one or two people conduct the interview, but on occasion a group or panel of four or more attend. The job interview allows a potential employer to observe and evaluate your character traits (such as personality, confidence, and communication style) with the credentials and experience from your **résumé** and **application cover letter** serving as background. Because it is impossible to know exactly what to expect, it is important that you be well prepared. See also **job search**.

Before the Interview

The interview facilitates a two-way communication process. It presents you with an opportunity to ask questions of your potential employer. Before the interview, learn everything you can about the organization by answering for yourself such questions as the following:

- What kind of organization (profit, nonprofit, government) is it?
- What are the mission, goals, and objectives of the organization?
- What types of services or products does the company provide?
- Does the company operate locally, regionally, or internationally?
- Is the company privately owned or employee owned?
- How many employees are there?
- Is the company a subsidiary of a larger operation?
- How long has the company been in business?
- Where will I fit in? Does there appear to be opportunity for advancement?

You can obtain information from current employees, the Internet, the company's publications, or the business section of back issues of local newspapers. The company's Web site may help you learn about the company's size, sales volume, product line, credit rating, branch locations, subsidiary companies, new products and services, building programs, and similar information. You may also conduct **research** using a company's annual reports and other publications, such as *Moody's Industrials*, *Dun and Bradstreet*, *Standard and Poor's*, and *Thomas' Register*, as well as other business reference sources a librarian might suggest. Ask your interviewer about what you cannot find through your own research. Doing so demonstrates your interest and allows you to learn more about your potential employer.

Try to anticipate the questions your interviewer might ask and rehearse your answers in advance. Be sure you understand a question before answering it and avoid responding too quickly with a rehearsed reply. Be prepared to respond in a natural and relaxed manner, taking care not to provide unnecessary details. Interviewers typically ask the following questions:

- What are your short-term and long-term occupational goals?
- Where do you see yourself five years from now?
- What are your major strengths and weaknesses?
- Do you work better with others or alone?
- What academic or career accomplishment are you particularly proud of? Describe it.
- Why are you leaving your current job?
- May we contact your previous employer?
- Why do you want to work for this organization?
- Why should I hire you?
- What salary and benefits do you expect?

Rather than such straightforward questions, some employers use behavioral interviews that focus on asking the candidate to provide examples or respond to hypothetical situations. Interviewers who use behavior-based questions are looking for specific examples from your experience. Prepare for the behavioral interview by recollecting challenging situations or problems that you successfully resolved. Examples of behavior-based questions include the following:

- Tell me about a time when you experienced conflict while on a team.
- If I were your boss and you disagreed with a decision I made, what would you do?
- How have you used your leadership skills to bring about change?
- Tell me about a time when you failed and what you learned from the experience.

Difficult Questions

Questions that seem personal, appear to breach legal ethics, or otherwise make you uncomfortable not only can be hard to answer but also can quickly erode the confidence you worked so hard to build throughout the preparation phase. Remaining composed and remembering that the employer's objective is simply to determine whether you are the best candidate for the position will help you respond appropriately to difficult questions. Be brief, concise, and truthful in your answers. Common questions that may broach sensitive subjects may include the following:

- Have you ever experienced a layoff or been terminated?
- Why did you stay with previous employers on average for just a year?
- Why do you have such a large gap of employment between these dates?

PROFESSIONALISM NOTE Plan to arrive 10 to 15 minutes early to the interview; never be late. Always bring extra copies of your résumé, a writing instrument, a note pad, samples of your work or portfolio (if applicable), and a list of references and contact information. Turn off any electronic devices prior to your arrival. If you are asked to complete an application form, read it carefully before you write and proofread it when you are finished. The form provides a written record for company files and indicates to the company how well you follow directions and complete a task.

During the Interview

The interview actually begins when you arrive. Be polite to other employees you meet. What you wear and how you act make a first impression. In general, dress simply and conservatively, avoid extremes in fragrance and cosmetics, and be well groomed.

Behavior. After introductions, thank the interviewer for his or her time, express your pleasure at meeting him or her, and remain standing until you are offered a seat. Sit up straight (good posture suggests self-assurance), maintain eye contact with the interviewer, and try to appear relaxed and confident. During the interview, use nervous energy to your advantage by channeling it into the alertness that you will need to listen and respond effectively. Do not attempt to take extensive notes, use a laptop computer, or use a cell phone during the interview. You can jot down a few facts, but keep your focus on the interviewer. See also **listening**.

Responses. When you answer questions, do not ramble or stray from the subject. Say only what you must to answer each question properly and then stop, but avoid giving just yes or no answers—they usually do not allow the interviewer to learn enough about you. Some interviewers allow a silence to fall just to see how you will react. The burden of conducting the interview is the interviewer's, not yours—and he or she may interpret your rush to fill a void in the conversation as a sign of insecurity. If such a silence makes you uncomfortable, be ready to ask an intelligent question about the company.

If the interviewer overlooks important points, bring them up. Let the interviewer mention salary first. Doing so yourself may indicate that you are more interested in the money than in the work. Make sure, however, that you are aware of prevailing salaries and benefits in your field or geographic region. See **salary negotiations**.

Interviewers look for a degree of self-confidence and an applicant's understanding of the field, as well as genuine interest in the field, the company, and the job. Ask questions to communicate your interest in the job and the company. Interviewers respond favorably to applicants who can communicate and present themselves well.

Conclusion. At the conclusion of the interview, thank the interviewer for his or her time. Be sure to make note of each interviewer's name. Reiterate your interest in the position and try to get an idea of when the company expects to make a final decision. Reaffirm friendly contact with a firm handshake.

After the Interview

After you leave the interview, jot down the pertinent information you obtained, as it may be helpful in comparing job offers. As soon as possible following a job interview, send the interviewer(s) a note of thanks in a brief **letter** or **e-mail**. Such notes often include the following:

- Your thanks for the interview and to individuals or groups that gave you special help or attention during the interview
- The name of the specific job for which you interviewed
- Your impression of the opportunity
- Your confidence that you can perform the job well
- An offer to provide further information or answer further questions

Figure I–9 shows a typical example of follow-up correspondence.

If you are offered a job you want, accept the offer verbally and write a brief letter of acceptance as soon as possible—certainly within a week.

Dear Mr. Vallone:

Thank you for the opportunity to interview for the Director of Project Management position with you and your Health System directors, Mr. Sylvan Smith and Ms. Annie Rowan. I enjoyed our discussion, and the interview provided me with a clear picture of the company's operation, as well as the vision embraced by your directors for the continued success of corporate goals and objectives.

I left the interview feeling enthusiastic about the scope of the position, as well as the opportunity to lead and direct the Information Management initiatives of one of the largest health-care systems in the United States.

I remain very interested in continuing my career advancement with West End Health, and I look forward to a positive decision in reference to my candidacy. If you have any further questions, please contact me at (312) 346-9384.

Sincerely,

Elaine Treadwell

FIGURE I–9. Follow-up Correspondence

If you do not want the job, write a refusal letter or e-mail, as described in **acceptance / refusal letters**.

introductions

DIRECTORY

Routine Openings 287
Opening Strategies 288
Objective 288
Problem Statement 288
Scope 288
Background 288
Summary 289
Interesting Detail 289
Definition 289
Anecdote 289
Quotation 290
Forecast 290
Persuasive Hook 290
Full-Scale Introductions 290
Manuals and Specifications 291

Every document must have either an opening or an introduction. An opening usually simply focuses the reader's attention on your topic and then proceeds to the body of your document. A formal introduction, however, sets the stage by providing necessary information to understand the discussion that follows in the body. In general, **correspondence** and routine **reports** need only an opening; more-complex reports and other longer documents need an introduction. Introductions are required for such documents as **formal reports** and major **proposals**. For a discussion of comparable sections for Web sites, see **writing for the Web**. See also **conclusions**.

Routine Openings

When your **audience** is familiar with your topic or if what you are writing is brief or routine, then a simple opening will provide adequate **context**, as shown in the following examples.

LETTER

Dear Mr. Ignatowski:
You will be happy to know that we have corrected the error in your bank balance. The new balance shows . . .

MEMO

To date, 18 of the 20 specimens your department submitted for analysis have been examined. Our preliminary analysis indicates . . .

E-MAIL

Jane, as I promised in my e-mail yesterday, I've attached the engineering division budget estimates for fiscal year 2015.

Opening Strategies

Opening strategies are aimed at focusing the readers' attention and motivating them to read the entire document.

Objective. In reporting on a project, you might open with a statement of the project's objective so that the readers have a basis for judging the results.

- The primary goal of this project was to develop new techniques to solve the problem of waste disposal. Our first step was to investigate . . .

Problem Statement. One way to give readers the perspective of your report is to present a brief account of the problem that led to the study or project being reported.

- Several weeks ago a manager noticed a recurring problem in the software developed by Datacom Systems. Specifically, error messages repeatedly appeared when, in fact, no specific trouble. . . . After an extensive investigation, we found that Datacom Systems . . .

For proposals or formal reports, of course, problem statements may be more elaborate and a part of the full-scale introduction, which is discussed later in this entry.

Scope. You may want to present the **scope** of your document in your opening. By providing the parameters of your material, the limitations of the subject, or the amount of detail to be presented, you enable your readers to determine whether they want or need to read your document.

- This pamphlet provides a review of the requirements for obtaining a private pilot's license. It is not intended as a textbook to prepare you for the examination itself; rather, it outlines the steps you need to take and the costs involved.

Background. The background or history of a subject may be interesting and lend perspective and insight to a subject. Consider the following example from a newsletter describing the process of oil drilling:

- From the bamboo poles the Chinese used when the pyramids were young to today's giant rigs drilling in deep water, there has been considerable progress in the search for oil. But whether in ancient China or a modern city, underwater or on a mountaintop, the objective of drilling has always been the same—to manufacture a hole in the ground, inch by inch.

Summary. You can provide a summary opening by describing in abbreviated form the results, conclusions, or recommendations of your article or report. Be concise: Do not begin a summary by writing "This report summarizes. . . ."

CHANGE This report summarizes the advantages offered by the photon as a means of examining the structural features of the atom.

TO As a means of examining the structure of the atom, the photon offers several advantages.

Interesting Detail. Often an interesting detail will attract the readers' attention and arouse their curiosity. Readers of a **white paper** for a manufacturer of telescopes and scientific instruments, for example, may be persuaded to invest if they believe that the company is developing innovative, cutting-edge products.

- The rings of Saturn have puzzled astronomers ever since they were discovered by Galileo in 1610 using the first telescope. Recently, even more rings have been discovered. . . .

  Our company's Scientific Instrument Division designs and manufactures research-quality, computer-controlled telescopes that promise to solve the puzzles of Saturn's rings by enabling scientists to use multicolor differential photometry to determine the rings' origins and compositions.

Definition. Although a definition can be useful as an opening, do not define something with which your audience is familiar or provide a definition that is obviously a contrived opening (such as "Webster defines *technology* as . . ."). A definition should be used as an opening only if it offers insight into what follows.

- *Risk* is often a loosely defined term. In this report, risk refers to a qualitative combination of the probability of an event and the severity of the consequences of that event. In fact, . . .

Anecdote. An anecdote can be used to attract and build interest in a subject that may otherwise be mundane; however, this strategy is best suited to longer documents and **presentations**.

- In his poem "The Calf Path" (1895), Sam Walter Foss tells of a wandering, wobbly calf trying to find its way home at night through the lonesome woods. It made a crooked path, which was taken up the next day by a lone dog. Then "a bellwether sheep pursued the trail over vale and steep, drawing behind him the flock, too, as all good bellwethers do." This forest path became

a country lane that bent and turned and turned again. The lane became a village street, and at last the main street of a flourishing city. The poet ends by saying, "A hundred thousand men were led by a calf near three centuries dead."

Many companies today follow a "calf path" because they react to events rather than planning. . . .

Quotation. Occasionally, you can use a quotation to stimulate interest in your subject. To be effective, however, the quotation must be pertinent—not some loosely related remark selected from a book of quotations.

- Deborah Andrews predicted that "technical communicators in the twenty-first century must reach audiences and collaborate across borders of culture, language, and technology" [B3]. One way we are accomplishing that goal is to make sure our training includes cross-cultural experiences that provide . . .

Forecast. Sometimes you can use a forecast of a new development or trend to gain the audience's attention and interest.

- In the not-too-distant future, we may be able to use a handheld medical diagnostic device similar to those in science fiction to assess the physical condition of accident victims. This project and others are now being developed at The Seldi Group, Inc.

Persuasive Hook. Although all opening strategies contain persuasive elements, the hook uses **persuasion** most overtly. A **brochure** touting the newest innovation in tax-preparation software might address readers as follows:

- Welcome to the newest way to do your taxes! TaxPro EZ ends the headache of last-minute tax preparation with its unique Web-Link feature.

Full-Scale Introductions

The purpose of a full-scale introduction is to give readers enough general information about the subject to enable them to understand the details in the body of the document. (See Figure F–5, pages 210–11). An introduction should accomplish any or all of the following:

- *State the subject*. Provide background information, such as definition, history, or theory, to provide context for your readers.
- *State the purpose*. Make your readers aware of why the document exists and whether the material provides a new perspective or clarifies an existing perspective.

- *State the scope*. Tell readers the amount of detail you plan to cover.
- *Preview the development of the subject*. Especially in a longer document, outline how you plan to develop the subject. Providing such information allows readers to anticipate how the subject will be presented and helps them evaluate your conclusions or recommendations.

Consider writing an opening or introduction last. Many writers find that it is only when they have drafted the body of the document that they have a full enough perspective on the subject to introduce it adequately.

Manuals and Specifications

You may need to write one kind of introduction for reports, academic papers, or **trade journal articles** and a different kind for **manuals** or **specifications**. When writing an introduction for a manual or set of specifications, identify the topic and its primary purpose or function in the first sentence or two. Be specific, but do not go into elaborate detail. Your introduction sets the stage for the entire document, and it should provide readers with a broad frame of reference and an understanding of the overall topic. Then the reader is ready for technical details in the body of the document.

How technical your introduction should be depends on your readers: What are their technical backgrounds? What kind of information are they seeking in the manual or specification? The topic should be introduced with a specific audience in mind—a computer user, for example, has different interests in an application program and a different technical vocabulary than a programmer. Whether you need to provide explanations or definitions of terminology will depend on your intended audience. The following example is written for readers who understand such terms as "constructor" and "software modules."

> The System Constructor is a program that can be used to create operating systems for a specific range of microcomputer systems. The constructor selects requested operating software modules from an existing file of software modules and combines those modules with a previously compiled application program to create a functional operating system designed for a specific hardware configuration. It selects the requested software modules, establishes the necessary linkage between the modules, and generates the control tables for the system according to parameters specified at run time.

You may encounter a dilemma that is common in technical writing: Although you cannot explain topic A until you have explained topic B, you cannot explain topic B before explaining topic A. The solution is

to explain both topics in broad, general terms in the introduction, as in the following paragraph that introduces "source units" and "destination units":

- The NEAT/3 programming language, which treats all peripheral units as file storage units, allows your program to perform data input or output operations, depending on the specific unit. Peripheral units from which your program can only input data are referred to as *source units*; those to which your program can only output data are referred to as *destination units*.

Then, when you need to write a detailed explanation of topic A (*source units*), you will be able to do so because your reader will know just enough about both topics A and B to be able to understand your detailed explanation.

investigative reports

An investigative **report** offers a precise analysis of a workplace problem or an issue in response to a need for information. The investigative report shown in Figure I–10, for example, evaluates whether a company should adopt a program called "Basic English" to train and prepare documentation for non–English-speaking readers. See also **laboratory reports**.

Open an investigative report with a statement of its primary and any secondary **purposes**, then define the **scope** of your investigation. If the report includes a survey of opinions, for example, indicate the number of people surveyed and other identifying information, such as income categories and occupations. (See also **questionnaires**.) Include any information that is pertinent in defining the extent of the investigation. Then report your findings and discuss their significance with your **conclusions**.

Sometimes the person requesting the investigative report may need to make recommendations as a result of your findings. In that case, the report may be referred to as a *recommendation report*. See also **feasibility reports** and **trouble reports**.

italics

Italics is a style of type used to denote **emphasis** and to distinguish foreign expressions, book titles, and certain other elements. *This sentence is printed in italics*. Italic type is often signaled by underlining in

Memo

To: Noreen Rinaldo, Training Manager

From: Charles Lapinski, Senior Instructor *CL*

Date: February 6, 2012

Subject: Adler's Basic English Program

As requested, I have investigated Adler Medical Instruments' (AMI's) Basic English Program to determine whether we might adopt a similar program.

The purpose of AMI's program is to teach medical technologists outside the United States who do not speak or read English to understand procedures written in a special 800-word vocabulary called *Basic English.* This program eliminates the need for AMI to translate its documentation into a number of different languages. The Basic English Program does not attempt to teach the medical technologists to be fluent in English but, rather, to recognize the 800 basic words that appear in Adler's documentation.

Course Analysis

The course teaches technologists a basic medical vocabulary in English; it does not provide training in medical terminology. Students must already know, in their own language, the meaning of medical vocabulary (e.g., the meaning of the word *hemostat*). Students must also have basic knowledge of their specialty, must be able to identify a part in an illustrated parts book, must have used AMI products for at least one year, and must be able to read and write in their own language.

Students are given an instruction manual, an illustrated book of equipment with parts and their English names, and pocket references containing the 800 words of the Basic English vocabulary plus the English names of parts. Students can write the corresponding word in their language beside the English word and then use the pocket reference as a bilingual dictionary. The course consists of 30 two-hour lessons, each lesson introducing approximately 27 words. No effort is made to teach pronunciation; the course teaches only recognition of the 800 words.

Course Success

The 800-word vocabulary enables the writers of documentation to provide medical technologists with any information that might be required because the subject areas are strictly limited to usage, troubleshooting, safety, and operation of AMI medical equipment. All nonessential words (*apple, father, mountain,* and so on) are eliminated, as are most synonyms (for example, *under* appears, but *beneath* does not).

Conclusions and Recommendations

AMI's program appears to be quite successful, and a similar approach could also be appropriate for us. I see two possible ways in which we could use some or all of the elements of AMI's program: (1) in the preparation of our student manuals or (2) as AMI uses the program.

I think it would be unnecessary to use the Basic English methods in the preparation of manuals for *all* of our students. Most of our students are English speakers to whom an unrestricted vocabulary presents no problem.

As for our initiating a program similar to AMI's, we could create our own version of the Basic English vocabulary and write our instructional materials in it. Because our product lines are much broader than AMI's, however, we would need to create illustrated parts books for each of the different product lines.

FIGURE I–10. Investigative Report

manuscripts submitted for typesetting or where italic font is not available. You may need to italicize words that require special emphasis in a sentence. ("Contrary to projections, sales have *not* improved.") Do not overuse italics for emphasis, however. ("*This* will hurt *you* more than *me*.")

Foreign Words and Phrases

Foreign words and phrases are italicized: *bonjour*, *guten tag*, the sign said "*Se habla español.*" Foreign words that have been fully assimilated into English need not be italicized: cliché, etiquette, vis-à-vis, de facto, résumé. When in doubt about whether to italicize a word, consult a current dictionary. See also **foreign words in English**.

Titles

Italicize the **titles** of separately published documents, such as books, periodicals, newspapers, pamphlets, brochures, legal cases, movies, and television programs.

- The book *Turning Workplace Conflicts into Collaboration* was reviewed in the *New York Times*.

Abbreviations of such titles are italicized if their spelled-out forms would be italicized.

- The *NYT* is one of the nation's oldest newspapers.

Italicize the titles of compact discs, videotapes, plays, long poems, paintings, sculptures, and long musical works.

CD-ROM	*Computer Security Tutorial on CD-ROM*
PLAY	Arthur Miller's *Death of a Salesman*
LONG POEM	T. S. Eliot's *The Wasteland*
MUSICAL WORK	Gershwin's *Porgy and Bess*

Use **quotation marks** for parts of publications, such as chapters of books and articles or sections within periodicals.

Proper Names

The names of ships, trains, and aircraft (but not the companies or governments that own them) are italicized: U.S. aircraft carrier *Independence*, Amtrak's passenger train *Coast Starlight*. Craft that are known by model or serial designations are not italicized: DC-7, Boeing 747.

Words, Letters, and Figures

Words, letters, and figures discussed as such are italicized.

- The word *inflammable* is often misinterpreted.
- The *S* and *6* keys on my keyboard do not function.

Subheads

Subheads in a report are sometimes italicized.

- *Training Managers*. We are leading the way in developing first-line managers who not only are professionally competent but . . .

See also **headings** and **layout and design**.

its / it's

Its is a possessive **pronoun** and does not use an **apostrophe**. *It's* is a **contraction** of *it is*.

- *It's* essential that the lab maintain *its* quality control.

See also **expletives** and **possessive case**.

J

jargon

Jargon is a specialized slang that is unique to an occupational or a professional group. For example, "the *attending*" is slang used by medical professionals to refer to "the attending physician" in a hospital. Jargon is at first understood only by insiders; over time, it may become known more widely and become a **buzzword**. If all your readers are members of a particular occupational group, jargon may provide an efficient means of communicating. However, if you have any doubt that your entire **audience** is part of such a group, avoid using jargon. See also **affectation**, **functional shift**, **gobbledygook**, and **plain language**.

job descriptions

Most large companies and many small ones use formal job descriptions to specify the duties of and requirements for many of the jobs in the firm.* Job descriptions fulfill several important functions: They provide information on which equitable salary scales can be based, they help management determine whether all functions within a company are adequately supported, and they let both prospective and current employees know exactly what is expected of them. Together, all the job descriptions in a firm present a picture of the organization's structure.

Although job-description formats vary from organization to organization, they commonly contain the following sections:

- The *accountability section* identifies, by title only, the person to whom the employee reports.
- The *scope of responsibilities* section provides an overview of the primary and secondary functions of the job and states, if applicable, who reports to the employee.
- The *specific duties* section gives a detailed account of the particular duties of the job as concisely as possible.

*Job descriptions are sometimes called *position descriptions*, a term also used for formal announcements of openings for professional or administrative positions.

Manager, Technical Publications
Dakota Electrical Corporation

Accountability

Reports directly to the Vice President, Customer Service.

Scope of Responsibilities

The Manager of Technical Publications plans, coordinates, and supervises the design and development of technical publications and documentation required to support the sale, installation, and maintenance of Dakota products. The manager is responsible for the administration and morale of the staff. The supervisor for instruction manuals and the supervisor for parts manuals report directly to the manager.

Specific Duties

- Directs an organization currently comprising 20 people (including two supervisors), over 75 percent of whom are writing professionals and graphic artists
- Screens, selects, and hires qualified applicants for the department
- Prepares a formal orientation program to familiarize writing trainees with the production of reproducible copy and graphic arts
- Evaluates the performance of and determines the salary adjustments for all department employees
- Plans documentation to support new and existing products
- Subcontracts publications and acts as a purchasing agent when needed
- Offers editorial advice to supervisors
- Develops and manages an annual budget for the Technical Publications Department
- Cooperates with the Engineering, Parts, and Service Departments to provide the necessary repair and spare-parts manuals upon the introduction of new equipment
- Serves as a liaison among technical specialists, the publications staff, and field engineers
- Recommends new and appropriate uses for the department within the company
- Keeps up with new technologies in printing, typesetting, art, and graphics and uses them to the advantage of Dakota Electrical Corporation where applicable

Requirements

- B.A. in professional writing or equivalent
- Minimum of three years' professional writing experience and a general knowledge of graphics, production, and Web design
- Minimum of two years' management experience with a knowledge of the general principles of management
- Strong interpersonal skills

FIGURE J–1. Job Description

- The *personal requirements* section lists the required or preferred education, training, experience, and licensing for the job.

The job description shown in Figure J–1 on page 297 is typical. It never mentions the person holding the job described; it focuses, instead, on the job and the qualifications required to fill the position.

WRITER'S CHECKLIST **Writing Job Descriptions**

- ✔ Before attempting to write your job description, list all the different tasks you do in a week or a month. Otherwise, you will almost certainly leave out some of your duties.
- ✔ Focus on content. Remember that you are describing your job, not yourself.
- ✔ List your duties in decreasing order of importance. Knowing how your various duties rank in importance makes it easier to set valid job qualifications.
- ✔ Begin each statement of a duty with a **verb** and be specific. Write "Orient new staff members to the department" rather than "New staff orientation."
- ✔ Review existing job descriptions that are considered well written.

job search

Whether you are applying for your first job or want to change careers entirely, begin by assessing your knowledge, skills, interests, and abilities, perhaps through **brainstorming**. Next, consider your career goals and values.* For instance, do you prefer working independently or collaboratively? Do you enjoy public settings? Do you like meeting people? How important are career stability and location? What would you most like to be doing in the immediate future? In two years? In five years?

Once you have narrowed your goals and identified a professional area that is right for you, consider the following sources to locate the job you want. Of course, do not rely on any one source exclusively.

*A good source for stimulating your thinking is the most recent edition of *What Color Is Your Parachute? A Practical Manual for Job-Hunters & Career-Changers* by Richard Nelson Bolles, published by Ten Speed Press.

- Networking and informational interviews
- Campus career services
- Web resources
- Job advertisements
- Trade and professional journal listings
- Employment agencies (private, temporary, government)
- Internships
- Direct inquiries

Keep a file during your job search of dated job ads, copies of **application cover letters** and **résumés**, and the names of important contacts. This collection can serve as a future resource and reminder.

Personal Brand and Branding

Branding is the art of associating your value as an individual with your name, service, product, business, and ability to interact with society. By learning how to manage other people and their perceptions of "your brand," you will naturally establish the unique value that sets you apart from the competition.

As you establish your business and working relationships, incorporate the principal components of your brand, including first impressions, demeanor, accomplishments, and the value you place on relationships with others, into every interaction. The following tips will help you to establish a foundation for personal and professional branding:

- *Performance, service, and reputation.* Determine the type of service or product you intend to provide to your employer, clients, or customers. Identify your goals and always deliver the service or product as promised, in a professional manner. The consistently professional and successful execution of service is the reason you will prevail over the competition.
- *Marketing strategy.* Look for opportunities to make yourself visible. In addition to the most common advertising outlets (newspapers, magazines, and professional organizations), online and social-media resources provide valuable benefits and will help you get your information out on the World Wide Web in just moments. Be sure to project a consistent and unified branding message across all media outlets.
- *Networking.* Never underestimate the power of networking. Daily routines provide often-overlooked opportunities for maintaining contacts, and it is important to continue actively networking, even after you are steadily employed. You can establish valuable

contacts by volunteering within the local community or assisting others when you have nothing to gain by doing so. For your business, provide free workshops, schedule product demonstrations, or distribute promotional materials to support business growth. On an individual level, you can simply serve as a reference for a colleague who recently became unemployed.

Networking and Informational Interviews

Networking involves communicating with people who might provide useful advice or may know of potential jobs in your interest areas. They may include people already working in your chosen field, contacts in professional organizations, professors, family members, or friends. Discussion groups and professional networking sites, such as *LinkedIn .com*, can be helpful in this process. Use your personal and professional contacts to expand your network. Most career professionals estimate that networking fills between 60 and 80 percent of all open positions.

Informational interviews are appointments you schedule with working professionals who can give you "insider" views of an occupation or industry. These brief meetings (usually 20 to 30 minutes) also offer you the opportunity to learn about employment trends as well as leads for employment opportunities. Because you ask the questions, these interviews allow you to participate in an interview situation that is less stressful than the job interview itself. To make the most of informational interviews, prepare carefully and review both **interviewing for information** and **interviewing for a job**.

Campus Career Services

A visit to a college career-development center is another good way to begin your job search. Government, business, and industry recruiters often visit campus career offices to interview prospective employees; recruiters also keep career counselors aware of their companies' current employment needs and submit **job descriptions** to them. Not only can career counselors help you select a career, but they can also put you in touch with the best and most-current resources—identifying where to begin your search and saving you time. Career-development centers often hold workshops on résumé preparation and offer other job-finding resources on their Web sites.

Web Resources

In addition to offering professional-networking sites mentioned earlier, the Web can enhance your job search in a number of ways. First, you can consult sites that give advice about careers, job seeking, and résumé preparation. Second, you can learn about businesses and organizations

that may hire employees in your area by visiting their Web sites. Such sites often list job openings, provide instructions for applicants, and offer other information, such as employee benefits. Third, you can learn about jobs in your field and post your résumé for prospective employers at a variety of privately owned or government-sponsored, online employment databases. Another benefit of using online resources to screen for opportunity lies in the ability to gather all the information required to help you make well-informed decisions as you take charge of your career path. For instance, among the many resources found at CareerOneStop (sponsored by the U.S. Department of Labor), a job seeker can research salary ranges for a particular region or career field. This tool is particularly valuable when you are moving to a new location, considering a career transition, or determining a valid range for negotiating compensation packages. Fourth, you can post your résumé at your personal Web site. Although posting your résumé at an employment database will undoubtedly attract more potential employers, including your résumé at your own site has benefits. For example, you might provide a link to your site in e-mail correspondence or provide your Web site URL in an inquiry letter to a prospective employer. If you use a personal Web site, however, it should contain only material that would be of professional interest to prospective employers, such as examples of your work, awards, and other items that portray your value as a candidate to a prospective employer.

Social Media

A quick search of the Internet reveals that there are thousands of social communities, service providers, and professional organizations online. These resources, commonly referred to as social media, offer a broad range of services, networking included. Perhaps the most valuable aspect of social media is the opportunity to make instantaneous connections both on an individual level with like-minded enthusiasts and with a large target audience, no matter what your goals may be.

Understand that any comments, personal or professional profiles, résumés, associations you participate in, or connections you make using social media build the foundation of your personal brand through perceptions or observations of the reader. Regularly review your profile on any social-media Web sites you use for controversial content, and monitor the activity of your connections. How you present yourself in public forums and the "company you keep" online reflects on your professionalism.

PROFESSIONALISM NOTE Surveys show that employers peruse *LinkedIn.com* and search engines like Google before recruiting candidates. Carefully consider the material that you post online when using social

and professional media resources such as *LinkedIn.com*, MySpace, Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube. A good rule of thumb is to only share online what you would comfortably share with the office. Investigate and activate each site's privacy settings to ensure that you maintain a professional image online. ◗

WEB LINK	Finding a Job
For job-hunting tips, sample documents, and links to the sites mentioned in this entry, see ***bedfordstmartins.com/alred*** and select *Finding an Internship or Job* and *Links for Handbook Entries*.	

Job Advertisements

Many employers advertise jobs in the classified sections of newspapers. Because job listings can differ, search in both the printed and Web editions of local and big-city newspapers under *employment* or *job market*. Use the search options they provide or the general strategies for database searches discussed in the entry **research**.

A human-relations specialist interested in training, for example, might find the specialty listed under "Human Resources" or "Consulting Services." Depending on a company's or government agency's needs, the listing could be even more specific, such as "Software Education Specialist" or "Learning and Development Coordinator."

As you read the ads, take notes on salary ranges, job locations, job duties and responsibilities, and even the terminology used in the ads to describe the work.

WEB LINK	O*NET Online
Knowledge of keywords and key expressions that are generally used to describe a particular type of work can be helpful when you prepare your résumé and letters of application. O*NET Online is a valuable resource for obtaining relevant words, information, and descriptions for hundreds of occupational fields and job titles. For more information on the O*NET database and a link to the site, see ***bedfordstmartins.com/alred*** and select *Links for Handbook Entries*.	

Trade and Professional Journal Listings

In many industries, associations publish periodicals of interest to people working in the industry. Such periodicals (print and online) often contain job listings. To learn about the trade or professional associations

for your occupation, consult resources on the Web, such as Google's Directory of Professional Organizations or online resources offered by your library or campus career office. You may also consult the following references at a library: *Encyclopedia of Associations* and *Encyclopedia of Business Information Sources*.

Employment Agencies (Private, Temporary, Government)

Private employment agencies are profit-making organizations that are in business to help people find jobs—for a fee. Reputable agencies provide you with job leads, help you organize your job search, and supply information on companies doing the hiring. A staffing agency or temporary placement agency could match you with an appropriate temporary or permanent job in your field. Temporary work for an organization for which you might want to work permanently is an excellent way to build your network while continuing your job search.

Choose an employment or a temporary-placement agency carefully. Some are well established and reputable; others are not. Check with your local Better Business Bureau and your college career office before you sign an agreement with a private employment agency. Further, be sure you understand who is paying the agency's fee. Often the employer pays the agency's fee; however, if you have to pay, make sure you know exactly how much. As with any written agreement, read the fine print carefully.

Local, state, and federal government agencies also offer many free or low-cost employment services. Locate local government agencies in telephone and Web directories under the name of your city, county, or state. For information on occupational trends, see the *Occupational Outlook Handbook* at *www.bls.gov/oco*, and for information on jobs with the federal government, see the U.S. Office of Personnel Management at *www.opm.gov*, or USAJOBS, the federal government's official jobs site at *www.usajobs.gov*. See also **salary negotiations**.

Internships

As you evaluate job options, consider taking an internship or entry-level position often lasting from six weeks to an entire semester (if not longer). An internship provides you with the chance to gain experience in a field through a variety of career opportunities. It enables you to

- Try a position without making a permanent commitment.
- Explore a field to clarify your career goals while getting on-the-job experience.

- Develop skills and gain experience in a new field or industry.
- Evaluate a prospective employer or firm.
- Acquire a mentor in the workplace.
- Benefit from networking contacts for future job opportunities.
- Gain access to professional references.
- Become eligible for a job offer based on an employer's satisfaction with your work.

To locate internship opportunities, begin with your campus career-development office. Such offices usually post internship opportunities at their Web site, but you can also make appointments with counselors or take advantage of walk-in hours.

Direct Inquiries

If you would like to work for a particular firm, write or call to ask whether it has any openings for people with your qualifications. Normally, you can contact the department head, the director of human resources, or both; for a small firm, however, write to the head of the firm. Such contacts work best if you have networked as described earlier in this entry.

WEB LINK	Direct-Inquiry Application Cover Letters
For an example of a direct-inquiry application cover letter — also called a "cold" application cover letter — see ***bedfordstmartins.com/alred*** and select *Model Documents Gallery*.	

Completing a Job or an Internship Application

The job application is often a key element to securing a job or an internship and provides you with the opportunity to portray personal assets that meet a specific job's requirements and to provide employers with a clear picture of your background and skill set. Job applications typically reflect the standard candidate information that companies require in order to consider you for a position. Forms used by employers, recruiters, institutions, and job-search sites can be found at the actual place of business or online at the company Web site. The job application may be required initially or later in the hiring process. Some employers may require just the job application, while others may require the job application, résumé, and application cover letter. In some cases, you will be required to complete the job application online — often within a time limit — and in others, you can download a form to complete at your

leisure and send back to the employer via mail, fax, or attached to an e-mail.

When filling out the job application, ensure that every blank is completed—your application should be neat and easy to read. See Figure J–2, Sections from a Job-Application Form, for guidance. Follow all directions carefully; if a particular area does not apply to you, indicate that it

Employment Application

Employer Name: *ACME Tech Support–Internship Department* **Announcement / Job Number:** *ATS-11096*

Position Title: *Computer Support Technician Candidate* **Current Date:** *JAN/03/2012*

PERSONAL INFORMATION **Social Security Number:** *404-256-0776*

Name (Last, First, Middle)		Cell Phone Number
Duffy, John W.		*404-522-7765*
Home Address	**Mailing Address**	**Home Phone Number**

EMPLOYMENT HISTORY / WORK EXPERIENCE—Begin with Most Recent Employer

Dates From–To (MMM/DD/YYYY)	Company Name	Address, City, State, Zip
JUL/04/2011 – DEC/28/2012	*Computer Service Mart*	*1234 E. HWY 1, Atlanta, GA 30301*

Job Title and Responsibilities, Skills, Attributes — *Customer Service Representative. Received more than 150 incoming calls daily, and responded to more than 100 online contacts; documented customer concerns; routed calls to appropriate department (over 15 in-house, and 10 corporate); established rapport with customers and department representatives; used five different automated data-management systems to track service initiatives; supervised and trained four employees; promoted twice in a nine-month period; filled Computer Tech position when required.*

Reason for Leaving:	Salary or Hourly Wage:	Supervisor's Name	Telephone Number
Relocation	*$29,550 per year*	*Mr. Alfred Smith*	*404-506-1298*

Dates From–To (MMM/DD/YYYY)	Company Name	Address, City, State, Zip

LEGAL

Have you ever filed for bankruptcy? ☐ YES ☒ NO

MILITARY HISTORY—Complete a Separate Entry for Each Branch of Service

Dates From–To (MMM/DD/YYYY)	Branch of Service	Last Duty Station
MAY/07/2003 – MAY/20/2011	*U.S. Army*	*Ft. Army, SC*

Occupational Skill, Description of Responsibilities — *Communications Specialist. Sustained communication assets and provided continuity in phone service, Internet service, and secure satellite connections to organizations in both tactical and garrison operating environments. Supervised and trained 10 subordinates, prepared performance evaluations and scheduled continuing education, compiled weekly/monthly equipment status reports, traveled worldwide supporting unit operations in three different continents and more than 10 countries.*

FIGURE J–2. Sections from a Job-Application Form (*continued*)

EDUCATION / TRAINING—Include Technical/Academic Achievements/Correspondence and Military Courses

Have you obtained a high school diploma or GED certificate? ☒ YES ☐ NO

Type School	Institution Name & Location	Diploma/ Degree	Major	Date/Year	GPA
College/University	*University of Maryland, College Park, MD*	*B.S.*	*Bus Mgmt*	*Projected 2013*	*3.4*

PROFESSIONAL CERTIFICATIONS / LICENSES

Type of License or Certificate	Awarded by:	Registration or Certificate No.	Expiration Date (MMM/DD/YYYY)
Commercial Driver's License	*State of Maryland*	*S87233597*	*NOV/07/2014*
Type of License or Certificate	Awarded by:	Registration or Certificate No.	Expiration Date (MMM/DD/YYYY)
Notary Public	*State of Georgia*	*752-09-330027*	*N/A*

OTHER SPECIAL SKILLS—List Other Specific Skills You Have to Offer for This Job Opening

Web Page Design and Hosting (Summer Internship, Programming Department, IBM, 2009).
Computer Maintenance / Repair Technician (Freelance Consultant, Community Research Department, 2009–2011.
Unit Communications / Networking Technician (Additional Duty, U.S. Army, 2007).
Typing Evaluation (Department of Labor Skills Assessment Division, 2011).
Bilingual (Fluent; Speak, read, and write Spanish and English).
Culturally Diverse (Traveled to three continents and visited more than 10 countries; firsthand experience in overcoming communication barriers).

REFERENCES—Provide Three Professional References (Persons Not Related to You)

Name, Job Title	Mailing Address	E-mail Address	Day Telephone	May We Contact?
Dr. J.R. Howard, Professor	*222 Hartford Street Atlanta, GA 30201*	*j.r.howard@gnet.com*	*404-522-9732*	☒ YES ☐ NO

I, *John Duffy*, certify that the information provided on this application is true and accurate to the best of my knowledge.
(printed name)

Signature *John Duffy* Date *1/3/12*

FIGURE J–2. Sections from a Job-Application Form (*continued*)

is not applicable by writing *N/A* in the empty space. This strategy signifies to the employer that you have thoroughly read the form and taken note of every requirement. Do not volunteer more information than the employer is asking for on the application. If you do not complete all entries or if you miss the application deadline, it is likely you will not be considered for the position.

WEB LINK | **Sample Job Application**

To view the full sample job application shown in Figure J–2, see ***bedfordstmartins.com/alred*** and select *Model Documents Gallery*.

❖ ETHICS NOTE Providing false information in your job application can be cause for dismissal and will reflect poorly on your character. Be honest and keep in mind that if you are wrong for a position and lie to obtain it, the employer can just as easily discover this after you are hired. ◗

WRITER'S CHECKLIST **Completing a Job Application**

- ✔ Read the entire application before you begin to fill it out.
- ✔ Follow all directions carefully. (This includes adhering to small details like date format, as these indicate how well you follow directions.)
- ✔ Always list a job title for the "Position Seeking" entry. A busy employer rarely has time to determine where you will best fit into the organization; applications with entries such as "any" or "open" will receive less consideration.
- ✔ Provide all requested information and complete irrelevant entries with *N/A*.
- ✔ Proofread the job application for errors or blank entries before submitting it.
- ✔ List the most-recent information (employer or education) first, working backward in time.
- ✔ When the application asks for your salary requirements, indicate "open," "negotiable," or a range commensurate with the industry and region.
- ✔ If the application asks why you left a previous employer, refrain from using negative phrases ("personal reasons," "fired," "illness," or "quit"). Positive phrases like "relocation," "seeking a new challenge," or "career advancement" will help you get to the interview stage, where you can address direct inquiries about a situation. See also interviewing for a job.
- ✔ References should be those who can speak to your professionalism, character, or work ethic. Be sure to ask permission before listing their names and contact information.
- ✔ Do not forget to sign and date the application.

❖ ETHICS NOTE When faced with questions that are sensitive or illegal (such as those about age, sex, disabilities, health, marital status, children, race, and criminal activity), you must carefully consider your response. If the question does not seem to raise a problem, you

can choose to answer it. If you feel the question is inappropriate, you can respond with *N/A* or another response (such as a line through the blank); this will indicate that you have read the content.

Understanding that many employers conduct background checks on candidates to protect their interests will help you determine the validity of a question. For example, a banking institution might be very concerned about a candidate's credit history, current debts, or bankruptcy status, or a government organization might be concerned about citizenship or ties to foreign countries. ❖

journal articles (*see* trade journal articles)

K

kind of / sort of

The phrases *kind of* and *sort of* should be used only to refer to a class or type of things.

- We require a special *kind of* training to ensure lab employee safety.

Do not use *kind of* or *sort of* to mean "rather," "somewhat," or "somehow." That usage can lead to vagueness; it is better to be specific.

VAGUE	It was *kind of* a bad year for employee safety.
SPECIFIC	The accident rate increased 10 percent last year.

know-how

The informal term *know-how*, meaning "special competence or knowledge," should be avoided in formal writing **style**.

- The applicant has impressive technical ~~know-how.~~ *skill.*

L

laboratory reports

Laboratory reports communicate the results of significant testing and experiments. (For simple, less-formal reports, see **test reports**.) They describe the **purpose**, methodology, results, and conclusions of the test or experiment and, when necessary, may include recommendations. They may also include a references section to research sources directly cited in the report. The example in Figure L–1 shows sections from a typical laboratory report. See also **documenting sources**.

Laboratory reports often make extensive use of the passive **voice** because of their focus on test procedures, methodology, and findings. That is, the subject, most often, is the test or experiment, not the scientist or technician. If your report requires **graphs** or **tables**, integrate them into your report as described in the entry **visuals**.

WEB LINK	Writing Laboratory Reports
For links to articles about writing and formatting laboratory reports, see ***bedfordstmartins.com/alred*** and select *Links for Handbook Entries*.	

lay / lie

Lay is a transitive **verb**—a verb that requires a direct object to complete its meaning—that means "place" or "put."

- We will *lay* the foundation one section at a time.

The past-tense form of *lay* is *laid*.

- We *laid* the first section of the foundation last month.

The perfect-tense form of *lay* is also *laid*.

- Since June, we *have laid* all but two sections of the foundation.

Lay is frequently confused with *lie*, which is an intransitive verb—a verb that does not require an object to complete its meaning—that means "recline" or "remain."

PCB Exposure from Oil Combustion

Wayne County Firefighters Association

Submitted to:
Philip Landowe, President
Wayne County Firefighters Association
Wandell, IN 45602

Submitted by:
Analytical Laboratories, Incorporated
1220 Pfeiffer Parkway
Indianapolis, IN 46223
February 27, 2012

INTRODUCTION

Waste oil used to train firefighters was suspected by the Wayne County Firefighters Association of containing polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs). According to information provided by Philip Landowe, President of the Association, it has been standard practice in training firefighters to burn 20–100 gallons of oil in a diked area of approximately 25–50 m^3. Firefighters would then extinguish the fire at close range. Exposure would last several minutes, and the exercise would be repeated two or three times each day for one week.

Oil samples were collected from three holding tanks near the training area in Englewood Park on November 14, 2011. To determine potential firefighter exposure to PCBs, bulk oil analyses were conducted on each of the samples. In addition, the oil was heated and burned to determine the degree to which PCB is volatized from the oil, thus increasing the potential for firefighter exposure via inhalation.

TESTING PROCEDURES

Bulk oil samples were diluted with hexane, put through a cleanup step, and analyzed in electron-capture gas chromatography. The oil from the underground tank that contained PCBs was then exposed to temperatures of 1008°C without ignition and 2008°C with ignition. Air was passed over the enclosed sample during heating, and volatized PCB was trapped in an absorbing medium. The absorbing medium was then extracted and analyzed for PCB released from the sample.

RESULTS

Bulk oil analyses are presented in Table 1. Only the sample from the underground tank contained detectable amounts of PCB. Aroclor 1260, containing 60 percent chlorine, was found to be present in this sample at 18 mg. Concentrations of 50 mg PCB in oil are considered hazardous. Stringent storage and disposal techniques are required for oil with PCB concentrations at these levels.

TABLE 1. Bulk Oil Analyses

Source	*Sample #*	*PCB Content (mg/g)*
Underground tank (11′ deep)	6062	18*
Circle tank	6063a	<1
(3′ deep)	6063b	<1
Square pool	6064a	<1
(3′ deep)	6064b	<1

*Aroclor 1260 is the PCB type. This sample was taken for volatilization study.

FIGURE L–1. Laboratory Report

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

At a concentration of 18 mg/g, 100 gallons of oil would contain approximately 5.5 g of PCB. Of the 5.5 g of PCB, about 0.3 g would be released to the atmosphere under the worst conditions.

The American Conference of Governmental Industrial Hygienists has established a threshold limit value (TLV)* of 0.5 mg/m^3 air for a PCB containing 54 percent Cl as a time-weighted average over an 8-hour work shift and has stipulated that exposure over a 15-minute period should not exceed 1 mg/m^3. The 0.3 g of released PCB would have to be diluted to 600 m^3 air to result in a concentration of 0.5 mg/m^3 or less. Because the combustion of oil lasted several minutes, a dilution to more than 600 m^3 is likely; thus, exposure would be less than 0.5 mg/m^3.

In summary, because exposure to this oil was limited and because PCB concentrations in the oil were low, it is unlikely that exposure from inhalation would be sufficient to cause adverse health effects. However, we cannot rule out the possibility that excessive exposure may have occurred under certain circumstances, based on factors such as excessive skin contact and the possibility that oil with a higher-level PCB concentration could have been used earlier. The practice of using this oil should be terminated.

* The safe average concentration that most individuals can be exposed to in an 8-hour day.

L

FIGURE L–1. Laboratory Report (*continued*)

- A person in shock should *lie* down with legs slightly elevated.

The past-tense form of *lie* is *lay* (not *lied*). This form causes the confusion between *lie* and *lay*.

- The injured employee *lay* still for approximately five minutes.

The perfect-tense form of *lie* is *lain*.

- The injured employee *had lain* still for five minutes before the EMTs arrived.

layout and design

DIRECTORY

Typography 313
Typeface and Type Size 314
Type Style and Emphasis 314
Page-Design Elements 315
Justification 315
Headings 315

Headers and Footers 315
Lists 316
Columns 316
White Space 316
Color 316
Visuals 316
Icons 316
Captions 317
Rules 317
Page Layout and Thumbnails 317

The layout and design of a document can make even the most complex information accessible and give **readers** a favorable impression of the writer and the organization. To accomplish those goals, a design should help readers find information easily; offer a simple and an uncluttered presentation; and highlight structure, hierarchy, and order. The design must also fit the **purpose** of the document and its **context**. For example, if clients are paying a high price for consulting services, they may expect a sophisticated, polished design; if employees inside an organization expect management to be frugal, they may accept—even expect—an economical and standard company design. See also **audience**.

Effective design is based on visual simplicity and harmony and can be achieved with careful selection of typography, page-design elements, and appropriate **visuals**, as well as thoughtful layout of text and visual components on a page.

Typography

Typography refers to the style and arrangement of type on a page. A complete set of all the letters, numbers, and symbols available in one typeface (or style) is called a *font*. The letters in a typeface have a number of distinctive characteristics, as shown in Figure L–2.

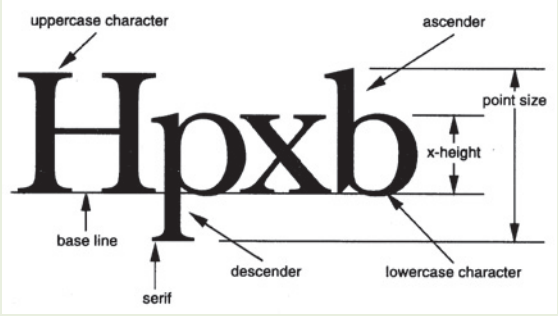


FIGURE L–2. Primary Components of Letter Characters

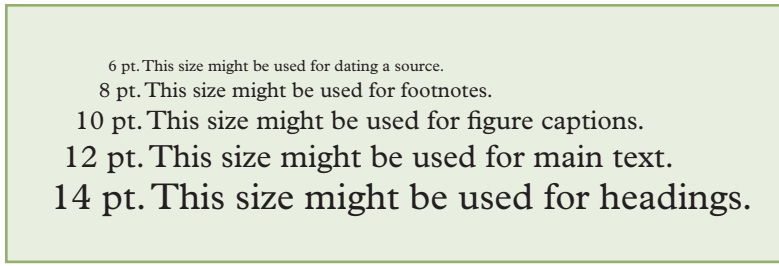

6 pt. This size might be used for dating a source.
8 pt. This size might be used for footnotes.
10 pt. This size might be used for figure captions.
12 pt. This size might be used for main text.
14 pt. This size might be used for headings.

FIGURE L–3. Type Sizes (6- to 14-Point Type)

Typeface and Type Size. For most on-the-job writing, select a typeface primarily for its legibility. Avoid typefaces that may distract readers. Instead, choose popular typefaces with which readers are familiar, such as Times Roman, Garamond, or Gill Sans. Avoid using more than two typefaces in the text of a document. For certain documents, however, such as **newsletters**, you may wish to use distinctively different typefaces for contrast among various elements such as headlines, **headings**, inset **quotations**, and sidebars. Experiment before making final decisions, keeping in mind your **audience**.

One way typefaces are characterized is by the presence or absence of serifs. Serif typefaces have projections, as shown in Figure L–2; sans serif styles do not. (*Sans* is French for "without.") The text of this book is set in Sabon, a serif typeface. Although sans serif type has a modern look, serif type is easier to read, especially in the smaller sizes. Sans serif, however, works well for headings (like the entry titles in this book) and for Web sites and other documents read on-screen.

Ideal font sizes for the main text of paper documents range from 10 to 12 points.* However, for some elements or documents, you may wish to select typeface sizes that are smaller (as in footnotes) or larger (as in headlines for **brochures**). See Figure L–3 for a comparison of type sizes in a serif typeface. Your readers and the distance from which they will read a document should help determine type size. For example, **instructions** that will rest on a table at which the reader stands require a larger typeface than a document that will be read up close. For **presentations** and **writing for the Web**, preview your document to see the effectiveness of your choice of point sizes and typefaces.

Type Style and Emphasis. One method of achieving emphasis through typography is to use capital letters. HOWEVER, LONG STRETCHES OF ALL UPPERCASE LETTERS ARE DIFFICULT TO READ. (See also **e-mail**.) Use all uppercase letters only in short spans, such as in

*A *point* is a unit of type size equal to 0.01384 inch, or approximately $^{1}/_{72}$ of an inch.

headings. Likewise, use italics sparingly because *continuous italic type reduces legibility and thus slows readers*. Of course, **italics** are useful if your aim is to slow readers, as in cautions and warnings. **Boldface**, used in moderation, may be the best cuing device because it is visually different yet retains the customary shapes of letters and numbers.

Page-Design Elements

Thoughtfully used design elements can provide not only emphasis but also visual logic within a document by highlighting organization. Consistency and moderation are important—use the same technique to highlight a particular feature throughout your document and be careful not to overuse any single technique. The following typical elements can be used to make your document accessible and effective: justification, headings, **headers and footers**, **lists**, columns, white space, and color. Some of these elements are illustrated in Figure F–5 on pages 204–20.

Justification. Left-justified (ragged-right) margins are generally easier to read than full-justified margins, especially for text using wide margins on 8½ × 11″ pages. Left justification is also better if full justification causes your word-processing or desktop-publishing software to insert irregular spaces between words, producing unwanted white space or unevenness in blocks of text. Full-justified text is more appropriate for publications aimed at a broad audience that expects a more formal, polished appearance. Full justification is also useful with narrow, multiple-column formats because the spaces between the columns (called *alleys*) need the definition that full justification provides.

Headings. Headings reveal the organization of a document and help readers decide which sections they need to read. You should provide typographic contrast between headings and the body text with either a different typeface or a different style (**bold**, *italic*, CAPS, and so on). Headings are often effective in boldface or in a sans serif typeface that contrasts with a body text in a serif typeface.

Headers and Footers. A header in a report, letter, or other document appears at the top of each page (as in this book), and a footer appears at the bottom of each page. Document pages may have headers or footers (or both) that include such elements as the topic or subtopic of a section, an identifying number, the date the document was written, the page number, and the document name. Keep your headers and footers concise because too much information in them can create visual clutter. However—at a minimum—a multipage document should include the page number in a header or footer. For more information on adding page numbers and laying out a page, see "Web Link: Designing Documents" on page 317. Headers are also important in **letters** and **memos**.

Lists. Vertically stacked words, phrases, and other items with numbers or bullets can effectively highlight such information as steps in sequence, materials or parts needed, key or concluding points, and recommendations. For further detail, see **lists**.

Columns. As you design pages, consider how columns may improve the readability of your document. A single-column format works well with larger typefaces, double-spacing, and left-justified margins. For smaller typefaces and single-spaced lines, the two-column structure keeps text columns narrow enough so that readers need not scan back and forth across the width of the entire page for every line. Avoid widows and orphans: a *widow* is a single word carried over to the top of a column or page; an *orphan* is a word on a line by itself at the end of a column.

White Space. White space visually frames information and breaks it into manageable chunks. For example, white space between paragraphs helps readers see the information in each paragraph as a unit. White space between sections can also serve as a visual cue to signal that one section is ending and another is beginning.

Color. Color and screening (shaded areas on a page) can distinguish one part of a document from another or unify a series of documents. They can set off sections within a document, highlight examples, or emphasize warnings. In **tables**, screening can highlight column titles or sets of data to which you want to draw the reader's attention.

Visuals

Readers notice visuals before they notice text, and they notice larger visuals before they notice smaller ones. Thus, the size of an illustration suggests its relative importance. For newsletter articles and publications aimed at wide audiences, consider especially the proportion of the visual to the text. Magazine designers often use the three-fifths rule: Page layout is more dramatic and appealing when the major element (**photograph**, **drawing**, or other visual) occupies three-fifths rather than one-half the available space. The same principle can be used to enhance the visual appeal of a **report**.

Visuals can be gathered in one place (for example, at the end of a report), but placing them in the text closer to their accompanying explanations makes them more effective. Illustrations in the text also provide visual relief. For advice on the placement of visuals, see the *Writer's Checklist: Creating and Integrating Visuals* on pages 580–81.

Icons. Icons are pictorial representations used to describe such concepts as computer files, programs, or commands. Commonly used icons

on the Web include the national flags to symbolize different language versions of a document. To be effective, icons must be simple and easily recognized without accompanying text. For using icons that are culturally appropriate, see **global graphics**.

Captions. Captions are titles that highlight or describe visuals, such as photographs. Captions often appear below figures and above tables; they may be aligned with the visual to the left or they may be centered.

Rules. Rules are vertical or horizontal lines used to enclose material in a box or to divide one area of the page from another. For example, rules and boxes set off visuals from surrounding explanations or highlight warning statements from the steps in instructions.

Page Layout and Thumbnails

Page layout involves combining typography, design elements, and visuals on a page to make a coherent whole. The flexibility of your design is affected by your design software, your method of printing the document, your budget, and whether your employer or client requires you to use a template.

Before you spend time positioning actual text and visuals on a page, especially for documents such as brochures, you may want to create a thumbnail sketch, in which blocks of simulated text and visuals indicate the placement of elements. You can go further by roughly assembling all the thumbnail pages to show the size, shape, form, and general style of a large document. Such a mock-up, called a *dummy*, allows you to see how a finished document will look.

WEB LINK	Designing Documents
Word-processing and desktop-publishing programs offer many options for improving the layout-and-design elements of your document. For a tutorial on these options, see ***bedfordstmartins.com/alred*** and select *Try a tutorial*, "On Designing Documents with a Word Processor." For step-by-step instructions for setting margins, alignment, columns, and other design elements, select *Digital Tips*, "Laying Out a Page" and "Creating Styles and Templates."	

lend / loan

Both *lend* and *loan* can be used as **verbs**, but *lend* is more common. ("You can *lend* [or *loan*] them the money if you wish.") Unlike *lend*, *loan* can be a **noun**. ("The bank approved our *loan*.")

letters

Business letters—normally written for those outside an organization—are often the most appropriate choice for formal communications with professional associates or customers. Letters may be especially effective for those people who receive a high volume of **e-mail** and other electronic messages. Letters printed on organizational letterhead communicate formality, respect, and authority. See **correspondence** for advice on writing strategy and style. See also **selecting the medium**.

Although word-processing software includes templates for formatting business letters, the templates may not provide the appropriate dimensions and elements you need. The following sections offer specific advice on formatting and related etiquette for business letters.*

Common Letter Styles

If your employer requires a particular format, use it. Otherwise, follow the guidelines provided here, and review the examples shown in Figures L–4 and L–5.

The two most common formats for business letters are the full-block style shown in Figure L–4 and the modified-block style shown in Figure L–5. In the *full-block style*, the entire letter is aligned at the left margin. In the *modified-block style*, the return address, date, and complimentary closing begin at the center of the page and the other elements are aligned at the left margin. All other letter styles are variations of the full-block and modified-block styles.

To achieve a professional appearance, center the letter on the page vertically and horizontally. Although one-inch margins are the default standard in many word-processing programs, it is more important to establish a picture frame of blank space surrounding the page of text. When you use organizational letterhead stationery, consider the bottom of the letterhead as the top edge of the paper. The right margin should be approximately as wide as the left margin. To give a fuller appearance to very short letters, increase both margins to about an inch and a half. Use your full-page or print-preview feature to check for proportion.

Heading

Unless you are using letterhead stationery, place your full return address and the date in the heading. Because your name appears at the end of the letter, it need not be included in the heading. Spell out words such as

*For additional details on letter formats and design, you may wish to consult a guide such as *The Gregg Reference Manual*, 11th ed., by William A. Sabin (New York: McGraw-Hill, 2010).

Letterhead

520 Niagara Street
Braintree, MA 02184

Phone: (781) 787-1175
Fax: (781) 787-1213
EvansTE.com

Date

May 15, 2012

Inside address

Mr. George W. Nagel
Director of Operations
Boston Transit Authority
57 West City Avenue
Boston, MA 02210

Salutation

Dear Mr. Nagel:

Body

Enclosed is our final report evaluating the safety measures for the Boston Intercity Transit System.

We believe that the report covers the issues you raised in our last meeting and that you will be pleased with the results. However, if you have any further questions, we would be happy to meet with you again at your convenience.

We would also like to express our appreciation to Mr. L. K. Sullivan of your committee for his generous help during our trips to Boston.

Complimentary closing

Sincerely,

Signature

Carolyn Brown

Writer's signature block

Carolyn Brown, Ph.D.
Director of Research
cbrown@EvansTE.com

End notations

CB/ls
Enclosure: Final Safety Report
cc: ITS Safety Committee Members

FIGURE L–4. Full-Block-Style Letter (with Letterhead)

Center
Heading from center to right
3814 Oak Lane
Dedham, MA 02180
December 10, 2012
Inside address
Dr. Carolyn Brown
Director of Research
Evans and Associates
Transportation Engineers
520 Niagara Street
Braintree, MA 02184
Salutation
Dear Dr. Brown:
Thank you very much for allowing me to tour your testing facilities. The information I gained from the tour will be of great help to me in preparing the report for my class at Marshall Institute. The tour has also given me some insight into the work I may eventually do as a laboratory technician.
Body
I especially appreciated the time and effort Vikram Singh spent in showing me your facilities. His comments and advice were most helpful.
Again, thank you.
Complimentary closing aligned with heading
Sincerely,
Signature
Leslie Warden
Writer's signature block
Leslie Warden
781-555-1212
End notation
cc: Vikram Singh
Center

FIGURE L–5. Modified-Block-Style Letter (without Letterhead)

street, *avenue*, *first*, and *west* rather than abbreviating them. You may either spell out the name of the state in full or use the standard Postal Service abbreviation available at *usps.com*. The date usually goes directly beneath the last line of the return address. Do not abbreviate the name of the month. Begin the heading about two inches from the top of the page. If you are using letterhead that gives the company address, enter only the date, three lines below the last line of the letterhead.

Inside Address

Include the recipient's full name, title, and address in the inside address, two to six lines below the date, depending on the length of the letter. The inside address should be aligned with the left margin, and the left margin should be at least one inch wide.

Salutation

Place the salutation, or *greeting*, two lines below the inside address and align it with the left margin. In most business letters, the salutation contains the recipient's personal title (such as *Mr.*, *Ms.*, *Dr.*) and last name, followed by a colon. If you are on a first-name basis with the recipient, use only the first name in the salutation.

Address women as *Ms.* unless they have expressed a preference for *Miss* or *Mrs.* However, professional titles (such as *Professor*, *Senator*, *Major*) take precedence over *Ms.* and similar courtesy titles.

When a person's first name could refer to either a woman or a man, one solution is to use both the first and last names in the salutation (*Dear Pat Smith:*). Avoid "To Whom It May Concern" because it is impersonal and dated.

For multiple recipients, the following salutations are appropriate:

- Dear Professor Allen and Dr. Rivera: [two recipients]
- Dear Ms. Becham, Ms. Moore, and Mr. Stein: [three recipients]
- Dear Colleagues: [*Members*, or other suitable collective term]

Subject Line

An optional element in a letter is a subject line, which should follow the salutation. Insert one blank line above and one blank line below the subject line. The subject line in a letter functions as it does for other correspondence as an aid in focusing the topic and filing the letter. (For information on creating subject lines, see page 113 of **correspondence**.)

Subject lines are especially useful if you are writing to a large company and do not know the name or title of the recipient. In such cases, you may address a letter to an appropriate department or identify the subject in a subject line and use no salutation.

- National Medical Supply Group
  501 West National Avenue
  Minneapolis, MN 55407

  Attention: Customer Service Department

  Subject: Defective Cardio-100 Stethoscopes

  I am returning six stethoscopes with damaged diaphragms that . . .

In other circumstances in which you do not know the recipient's name, use a title appropriate to the **context** of the letter, such as *Dear Customer* or *Dear IT Professional*.

Body

The body of the letter should begin two lines below the salutation (or any element that precedes the body, such as a subject or an attention line). Single-space within and double-space between paragraphs, as shown in Figures L–4 and L–5. To provide a fuller appearance to a very short letter, you can increase the side margins or increase the font size. You can also insert extra space above the inside address, the writer's signature block, and the initials of the person typing the letter—but do not exceed twice the recommended space for each of these elements.

Complimentary Closing

Type the complimentary closing two spaces below the body. Use a standard expression such as *Sincerely*, *Sincerely yours*, or *Yours truly*. (If the recipient is a friend as well as a business associate, you can use a less-formal closing such as *Best wishes* or *Best regards* or, simply, *Best*.) Capitalize only the initial letter of the first word, and follow the expression with a comma.

Writer's Signature Block

Type your full name four lines below and aligned with the complimentary closing. On the next line include your business title, if appropriate. The following lines may contain your individual contact information, such as a telephone number or an e-mail address, if not included in the letterhead or the body of your letter. Sign the letter in the space between the complimentary closing and your name.

End Notations

Business letters sometimes require additional information that is placed at the left margin, two spaces below the typed name and title of the writer in a long letter, four spaces below in a short letter.

Reference initials show the letter writer's initials in capital letters, followed by a slash mark (or colon), and then the initials of the person typing the letter in lowercase letters, as shown in Figure L–4. When the writer is also the person typing the letter, no initials are needed.

Enclosure notations indicate that the writer is sending material along with the letter (an invoice, an article, and so on). Note that you should mention the enclosure in the body of the letter. Enclosure notations may take several forms:

- Enclosure: Final Safety Report
- Enclosures (2)
- Enc. *or* Encs.

Copy notation ("cc:") tells the reader that a copy of the letter is being sent to the named recipient(s) (see Figure L–4). Use a blind-copy notation ("bcc:") when you do not want the addressee to know that a copy is being sent to someone else. A blind-copy notation appears only on the copy, not on the original ("bcc: Dr. Brenda Shelton"). See the Ethics Note in **e-mail** on page 166.

Continuing Pages

If a letter requires a second page (or, in rare cases, more), always carry at least two lines of the body text over to that page. Use plain (nonletterhead) paper of quality equivalent to that of the letterhead stationery for the second page. It should have a header with the recipient's name, the page number, and the date. Place the header in the upper left-hand corner or across the page, as shown in Figure L–6.

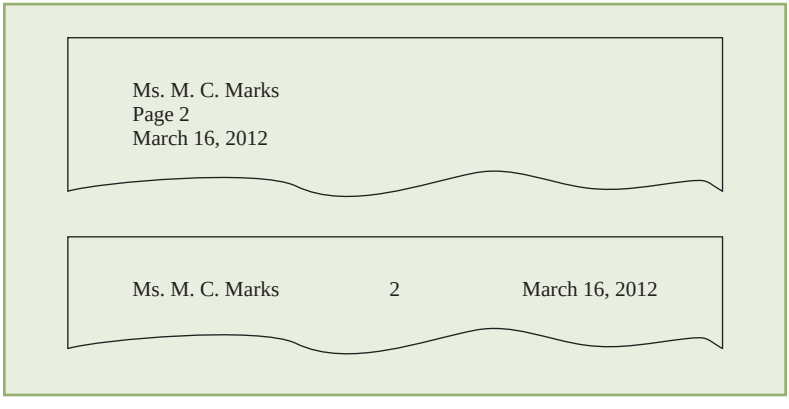


FIGURE L–6. Alternative Headers for the Second Page of a Letter

like / as

To avoid confusion between *like* and *as*, remember that *like* is a **preposition** and *as* (or *as if*) is a **conjunction**. Use *like* with a **noun** or **pronoun** that is not followed by a **verb**.

- The supervisor still behaves *like* a novice.

Use *as* before **clauses**, which contain verbs.

- He responded *as* we expected he would.
- The presentation seemed *as if* it would never end.

Like and *as* are used in **comparisons**: *Like* is used in constructions that omit the verb, and *as* is used when the verb is retained.

- He adapted to the new system *like* a duck to water.
- He adapted to the new system *as* a duck adapts to water.

listening

Effective listening enables the listener to understand the directions of an instructor, the message in a speaker's **presentation**, the goals of a manager, and the needs and wants of customers. Above all, it lays the foundation for productive communication.

Fallacies About Listening

Most people assume that because they can hear, they know how to listen. In fact, *hearing* is passive, whereas *listening* is active. Hearing voices in a crowd or a ringing telephone requires no analysis and no active involvement. We hear such sounds without choosing to listen to them—we have no choice but to hear them. Listening, however, requires actively focusing on a speaker, interpreting the message, and assessing its worth. Listening also requires that you consider the **context** of messages and the differences in meaning that may be the result of differences in the speaker's and the listener's occupation, education, culture, sex, race, or other factors. See also **biased language**, **connotation / denotation**, **English as a second language**, and **global communication**.

Active Listening

To become an active listener, you need to take the following steps:

Step 1: Make a Conscious Decision. The first step to active listening is simply making up your mind to listen. Active listening requires a conscious effort, something that does not come naturally. The well-known precept offers good advice: "Seek first to understand and *then* to be understood."*

Step 2: Define Your Purpose. Knowing why you are listening can go a long way toward managing the most common listening problems: drifting attention, formulating your response while the speaker is still talking, and interrupting the speaker. To help you define your purpose for listening, ask yourself these questions:

- What kind of information do I hope to get from this exchange, and how will I use it?
- What kind of message do I want to send while I am listening? (Do I want to portray understanding, determination, flexibility, competence, or patience?)
- What factors—boredom, daydreaming, anger, impatience—might interfere with listening during the interaction? How can I keep these factors from placing a barrier between the speaker and me?

Step 3: Take Specific Actions. Becoming an active listener requires a willingness to become a responder rather than a reactor. A *responder* is a listener who slows down the communication to be certain that he or she is accurately receiving the message sent by the speaker. A *reactor* simply says the first thing that comes to mind, without checking to make sure that he or she accurately understands the message. Take the following actions to help you become a responder and not a reactor.

- Make a conscious effort to be impartial when evaluating a message. For example, do not dismiss a message because you dislike the speaker or are distracted by the speaker's appearance, mannerisms, or accent.
- Slow down the communication by asking for more information or by **paraphrasing** the message received before you offer your thoughts. Paraphrasing lets the speaker know you are listening, gives the speaker an opportunity to clear up any misunderstanding, and keeps you focused.
- Listen with empathy by putting yourself in the speaker's position. When people feel they are being listened to empathetically, they tend to respond with appreciation and cooperation, thereby improving the communication.

*Stephen R. Covey, *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People: Powerful Lessons in Personal Change*, 15th ed. (New York: Free Press, 2004).

- Take notes, when possible, to help you stay focused on what a speaker is saying. **Note-taking** not only communicates your attentiveness to the speaker but also reinforces the message and helps you remember it.

Step 4: Adapt to the Situation. The requirements of active listening differ from one situation to another. For example, when you are listening to a lecture, you may be listening only for specific information. However, if you are on a team project that depends on everyone's contribution, you need to listen at the highest level so that you can gather information as well as pick up on nuances the other speakers may be communicating. See also **collaborative writing**.

lists

Vertically stacked lists of words, **phrases**, and other items that are often highlighted with bullets, numbers, or letters can save readers time by allowing them to see at a glance specific items or key points in a document. Lists also help readers by breaking up complex statements and by focusing on such information as steps in sequence, materials or parts needed, questions or concluding points, and recommendations, as shown in Figure L–7.

As Figure L–7 also shows, you should provide **context** for a list with an introductory sentence followed by a **colon** (or no punctuation for an

Before we agree to hold the software engineering conference at the Brent Hotel, we need to make sure the hotel can provide the following resources:

- Business center with state-of-the-art digital and printing services
- Main exhibit area that can accommodate thirty 8-foot-by-15-foot booths
- Eight meeting rooms, each with a podium or table and seating for 25 people
- Wi-Fi Internet access and digital projection in each room
- Ballroom dining facilities for 250 people with a dais for four speakers

To confirm that the Brent Hotel is our best choice, we should tour the facilities during our stay in Kansas City.

FIGURE L–7. Bulleted List in a Paragraph

incomplete sentence). Ensure **coherence** by following the list with some reference to the list or the statement that introduced it.

WRITER'S CHECKLIST **Using Lists**

Follow the practices of your organization or use these guidelines for consistency and formatting.

CONSISTENCY

- ✔ Do not overuse lists or create extended lists or **presentation** slides that are dense with lists.
- ✔ List only comparable items, such as tasks or equipment, that are balanced in importance (as in Figure L–7).
- ✔ Begin each listed item in the same way—whether with **nouns**, **verbs**, or other **parts of speech** — and maintain **parallel structure** throughout.

FORMATTING

- ✔ Capitalize the first word in each listed item, unless doing so is visually awkward.
- ✔ Use **periods** or other ending **punctuation** when the listed items are complete sentences.
- ✔ Avoid **commas** or **semicolons** following items and do not use the **conjunction** *and* before the last item in a list.
- ✔ Use numbers to indicate sequence or rank.
- ✔ Follow each number with a period and start the item with a capital letter.
- ✔ Use bullets (round, square, arrow) when you do not wish to indicate rank or sequence.
- ✔ List bulleted items in a logical order, keeping your **audience** and **purpose** in mind. See also **methods of development** and **persuasion**.
- ✔ When lists need subdivisions, use letters with numbers. See also **outlining**.

literature reviews

A literature review is a summary of the relevant publications (printed and electronic) available on a particular subject over a specified period of time. For example, a literature review might describe significant material published in the past five years on a technique for improving emergency medical diagnostic procedures, or it might describe all **reports**

written in the past ten years on efforts to improve safety procedures at a particular company. A literature review tells readers what has been published on a particular subject and gives them an idea of what material they should read in full.

Some **trade journal articles** or academic papers begin with a brief literature review to bring the reader up to date on current research in the field. The writer then uses the review as background for his or her own discussion of the subject. Figure L–8 shows a literature review that serves as an **introduction** for an article that surveys the use of visual communication in the workplace. A literature review also could be a whole document in itself. Fully developed literature reviews are good starting points for detailed **research**.

Our field's growing awareness of the centrality of visual communication to the work of professional writers has given rise to much of the visually oriented research in pedagogy, rhetoric, and related areas within professional communication (see, for example, Brasseur, 1997; Kostelnick, 1994). Complementing this work, educators have also been actively developing courses and programs to help prepare students for the expanded professional roles they will likely assume. It is not surprising, therefore, that a 2003 survey of members of the Association of Teachers of Technical Writing (ATTW) ascertained that teachers of professional writing give visual communication top billing as a topic of interest (Dayton & Bernhardt, 2004). However, while visual communication has established a firm foothold in professional communication research and pedagogy (Allen & Benninghoff, 2004), program coordinators and faculty more generally lack current data about the role of visual communication in the workplace. Such data could help to determine whether academic perceptions of the importance of visual communication are well founded, and, in turn, whether academic programs are meeting student needs in terms of workplace preparation. Such data could also provide concrete evidence in arguments about curricular design and enrich the information educators are able to offer students about the workplace life of the professional writer. As professional communication programs continue to mature and proliferate, such information will become even more useful.

Source: Brumberger, Eva. "Visual Communication in the Workplace: A Survey of Practice." *Technical Communication Quarterly* 16, no. 4 (Autumn 2007): 369–95.

FIGURE L–8. Literature Review

To prepare a literature review, you must first research published material on your topic. Because your readers may begin their research based on your literature review, carefully and accurately cite all bibliographic information. As you review each source, note the **scope** of the book or article and judge its value to the reader. Save all printouts of computer-assisted searches—you may want to incorporate the sources in a bibliography. See also **documenting sources**.

Begin a literature review by defining the area to be covered and the types of works to be reviewed. For example, a literature review may be limited to articles and reports and not include any books. You can arrange your discussion chronologically, beginning with a description of the earliest relevant literature and progressing to the most recent (or vice versa). You can also subdivide the topic, discussing works in various subcategories of the topic.

Annotated **bibliographies** are similar to literature reviews because they provide information to readers about published material. Unlike literature reviews, however, an annotated bibliography cites each bibliographic item and then describes it in a single block of text. The description (or *annotation*) may include the **purpose** of a published work, its scope, the main topics covered, its historical importance, and anything else the writer feels the reader should know.

logic errors

Logic is the study of the principles of reasoning. In most writing, especially in writing intended to persuade an **audience**, logic is essential to demonstrating that your conclusions are valid. This entry describes typical errors in logic that can undermine the point you are trying to communicate and your credibility. See also **persuasion**.

❖ ETHICS NOTE Many of the following errors in logic, when used to mislead **readers**, are unethical as well as illogical. See also **ethics in writing**. ❖

Lack of Reason

When a statement is contrary to the reader's common sense, that statement is not reasonable. If, for example, you stated, "New York City is a small town," your reader might immediately question your statement. However, if you stated, "Although New York City's population is over eight million, it is composed of neighborhoods that function as small towns," your reader could probably accept the statement as reasonable.

Sweeping Generalizations

Sweeping generalizations are statements that are too broad or all-inclusive to be supportable; they generally enlarge an observation about a small group to refer to an entire population. A flat statement such as "Management is never concerned about employees" ignores evidence that many managers are in fact concerned for their employees. Using such generalizations weakens your credibility.

Non Sequiturs

A non sequitur is a statement that does not logically follow a previous statement.

- I cleared off my desk, and the report is due today.

The missing link in these statements is that the writer cleared his or her desk to make space for materials to help finish the report that is due today. In your own writing, be careful that you do not allow gaps in logic to produce non sequiturs.

False Cause

A false cause (also called *post hoc, ergo propter hoc*) refers to the logical fallacy that because one event followed another event, the first somehow caused the second.

- I didn't bring my umbrella today. No wonder it is now raining.
- Because we now have our board meetings at the Education Center, our management turnover rate has declined.

Such errors in reasoning can happen when the writer hastily concludes that two events are related without examining whether a causal connection between them, in fact, exists.

Biased or Suppressed Evidence

A conclusion reached as a result of biased or suppressed evidence—self-serving data, questionable sources, purposely omitted or incomplete facts—is both illogical and unethical. Suppose you are preparing a report on the acceptance of a new policy among employees. If you distribute **questionnaires** only to those who think the policy is effective, the resulting evidence will be biased. Intentionally ignoring relevant data that might not support your position not only produces inaccurate results but also is unethical.

Fact Versus Opinion

Distinguish between fact and opinion. Facts include verifiable data or statements, whereas opinions are personal conclusions that may or may not be based on facts. For example, it is verifiable that distilled water boils at 100°C; that it tastes better or worse than tap water is an opinion. Distinguish the facts from your opinions in your writing so that your readers can draw their own conclusions.

Loaded Arguments

When you include an opinion in a statement and then reach conclusions that are based on that statement, you are loading the argument. Consider the following opening for a memo:

- I have several suggestions to improve the poorly written policy manual. First, we should change . . .

Unless everyone agrees that the manual is poorly written, readers may reject a writer's entire message because they disagree with this loaded premise. Conclusions reached with loaded statements are weak and can produce negative reactions in readers who detect the loading.

WEB LINK	Avoiding Logical Fallacies
Stephen Downes of the University of Alberta provides a guide to logical fallacies ("Stephen's Guide to the Logical Fallacies") that offers advice on spotting and correcting fallacies in arguments. See ***bedfordstmartins.com/alred*** and select *Links for Handbook Entries*.	

loose / lose

Loose is an **adjective** meaning "not fastened" or "unrestrained." ("He discovered a *loose* wire.") *Lose* is a **verb** meaning "be deprived of" or "fail to win." ("I hope we do not *lose* the contract.")

M

malapropisms

A malapropism is a word that sounds similar to the one intended but is ludicrously wrong in the **context**.

INCORRECT	Our employees are less *sedimentary* now that we have a fitness center.
CORRECT	Our employees are less *sedentary* now that we have a fitness center.

Intentional malapropisms are sometimes used in humorous writing; unintentional malapropisms can confuse readers and embarrass a writer. See also **figures of speech**.

manuals

Manuals (printed or electronic) help customers and technical specialists use and maintain products. They are often written by professional technical writers, although in smaller companies, engineers or technicians may write them. See also **instructions** and review the entries **process explanation** and **technical writing style**.

Types of Manuals

User Manuals. User manuals are aimed at skilled or unskilled users of equipment and provide instructions for the setup, operation, and maintenance of a product. User manuals also typically include safety precautions and troubleshooting charts and guides.

Tutorials. Tutorials are self-study guides for users of a product or system. Either packaged with user manuals or provided electronically, tutorials guide novice users through the operation of a product or system.

Training Manuals. Training manuals are used to prepare individuals for some procedure or skill, such as operating a respirator, flying an

airplane, or processing an insurance claim. Training manuals may be printed or delivered in electronic or online forms.

Operators' Manuals. Written for skilled operators of construction, manufacturing, computer, or military equipment, operators' manuals contain essential instructions and safety warnings. They are often published in a convenient format that allows operators to use them at a work site.

Service Manuals. Service manuals help trained technicians repair equipment or systems, usually at the customer's location. Such manuals often contain troubleshooting guides for locating technical problems.

Special-Purpose Manuals. Some users need manuals that fulfill special purposes; these include programmer reference manuals, overhaul manuals, handling and setup manuals, and safety manuals.

Designing and Writing Effective Manuals

Identify and Write for Your Audience. Will you be writing for novice users, intermediate users, or experts? Or will you be instructing a combination of users with different levels of technical knowledge and experience? Identify your **audience** before you begin writing. Depending on your audience, you will make the following decisions:

- Which details to include (fewer for experts, more for novices)
- What level of technical vocabulary to use (necessary technical terminology for experts, **plain language** for novices)
- Whether to include a summary list of steps (experts will probably prefer using this summary list and not the entire manual; once novices and intermediate users gain more skill, they will also prefer referring just to this summary list)

Design your manual so that **readers** can use the equipment, software, or machinery while they are also reading your instructions. See also **layout and design**.

- Provide **headings** and subheadings using words that readers will find familiar so that they can easily locate particular sections and instructions.
- Write with precision and accuracy so that readers can perform the procedures appropriately.
- Use clearly drawn and labeled **visuals** to show readers exactly what equipment, online screens, or other items in front of them should look like.

Provide an Overview. An overview at the beginning of a manual should explain the overall purpose of the procedure, how the procedure can be useful to the reader, and any cautions or warnings the reader should know about before starting. If readers know the purpose of the procedure and its specific workplace applications, they will be more likely to pay close attention to the steps of the procedure and apply them appropriately in the future.

Create Major Sections. Divide any procedure into separate goals, create major sections to cover those goals, and state those goals in the section headings. If your manual has chapters, you can divide each chapter into specific subsections. In a manual for students about designing a Web page, an introductory chapter might include these subsections: (1) obtaining Web space, (2) accessing the new space, (3) using a Web authoring tool.

Use Headings to Indicate the Goals of Actions. Within each section, you can use headings to describe *why* readers need to follow each step or each related set of steps. The conventional way to indicate a goal in a heading is to use the infinitive form of a **verb** ("*To scan* the document") or the gerund form ("*Scanning* the document"). Whichever verb form you choose for headings, use it consistently throughout your manual each time you want to indicate a goal. The following example shows how a heading can indicate the goal of a set of actions with the gerund form of the verb ("Scanning").

- **Scanning Documents**

  Action 1 Place the document in the feeder

  Action 2 Check the box below the window for single-page items

  Action 3 Click "SCAN" to open the "Scan Manager"

Use the Imperative Verb Form to Indicate Actions. The previous example shows the conventional way to indicate an action by using the imperative form of verbs ("*Place* the document"; "*Check* the box"). Use the imperative form consistently each time you want to indicate an action. In the example about scanning documents, the manual writer designated actions by placing subheads (Action 1, Action 2, and so on) in the left margin and imperative verbs ("Place," "Check," and "Click") in the instructions to the right of the subheads.

Use Simple and Direct Verbs. Simple and direct verbs are most meaningful, especially for novice readers. Avoid **jargon** and terms known only to experts, unless you know that they constitute the entire reading audience.

POOR VERB CHOICE	BETTER VERB CHOICE
Attempt	Try
Depress, Hit	Press
Discontinue	Stop
Employ	Use
Enumerate	Count
Execute	Do
Observe	Watch
Segregate	Divide

Indicate the Response of Actions. When appropriate, indicate the expected response of an action to reassure readers that they are performing the procedure correctly (for example, "A blinking light will appear" or "You will see a red triangle"). Use the form you choose consistently throughout a set of instructions to designate a response. In the following example, you can see how the response is indented farther to the right than the action, begins with a subhead ("Response"), and is indicated by a full sentence.

▶ Action 3	Click "SCAN" to open the "Scan Manager"
Response	The "Scan Manager" will open and ask you to choose "preview," "scan," or "help."

Check for Usability. To test the accuracy and **clarity** of your instructions, at a minimum ask someone who is not familiar with the subject to use the manual to spot missing steps or confusing passages. In most cases, you should conduct systematic **usability testing** on manual drafts so that you can detect errors and other problems readers might encounter.

WRITER'S CHECKLIST **Preparing Manuals**

- ✔ Determine the best medium for your manual: online document, CD-ROM, spiral binding, loose-leaf binding, and so on.
- ✔ Pay attention to **organization** and **outlining** because complex products and systems need well-organized manuals to be useful to readers.
- ✔ Use a consistent format and design for each part of a manual: headings, subheadings, goals, actions, responses, cautions, warnings, and tips.
- ✔ Use standardized symbols, as described in **global graphics**, especially for international readers or where regulations require them.

(*continued*)

WRITER'S CHECKLIST **Preparing Manuals** (*continued*)

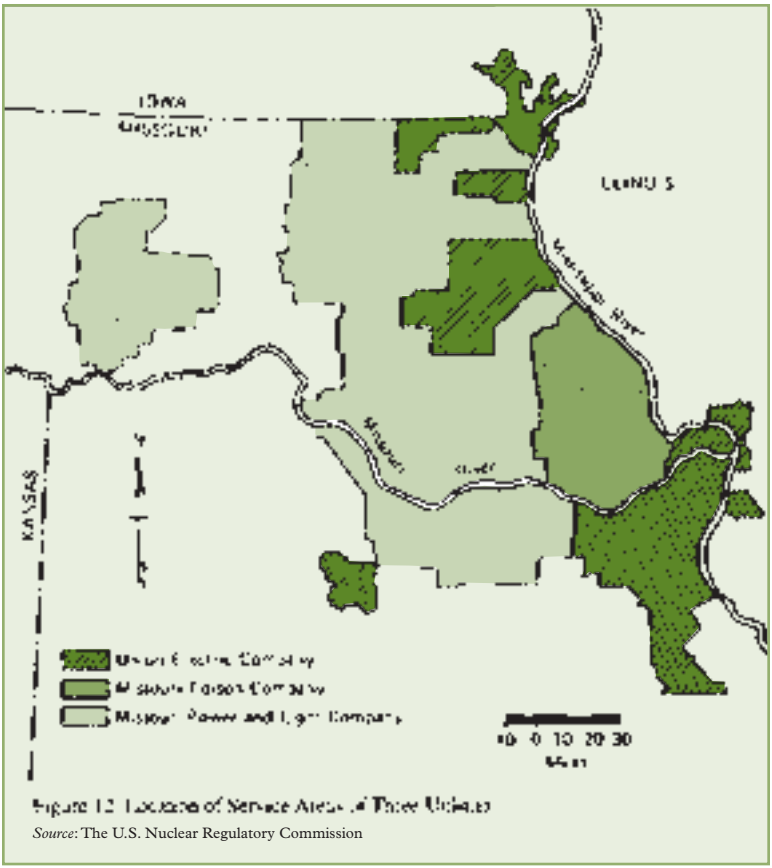
- ✔ Use visuals — such as screen shots, schematics, exploded-view **drawings**, **flowcharts**, **photographs**, and **tables** — placing them where they would most benefit readers.
- ✔ Include **indexes** to help readers find information.
- ✔ Use warning statements and standard symbols for potential dangers, as described on pages 270–71.
- ✔ Have manuals reviewed by your peers as well as by technical experts and other specialists to ensure that the manuals are helpful, accurate, and appropriate. See also **revision** and **proofreading**.

maps

Maps are often used to show specific geographic areas and features (roads, mountains, rivers, and the like). They can also illustrate geographic distributions of populations, climate patterns, corporate branch offices, and so forth. The map in Figure M–1, from an environmental assessment, shows the overlapping geographic areas served by three electric utilities in Missouri, Iowa, and Illinois. Note that the map contains a figure number and title, scale of distances, key (or legend), compass, and distinctive highlighting for emphasis. Maps are often used in **reports**, **proposals**, **brochures**, **environmental impact statements**, and other documents in which readers need to know the location or geographic orientation of buildings and other facilities.

WRITER'S CHECKLIST **Creating and Using Maps**

- ✔ Follow the general guidelines discussed in **visuals** for placement of maps.
- ✔ Label each map clearly, and assign each map a figure number if it is one of a number of illustrations.
- ✔ Clearly identify all boundaries in the map. Eliminate unnecessary boundaries.
- ✔ Eliminate unnecessary information that may clutter a map. For example, if the purpose of the map is to show population centers, do not include mountain elevations, rivers, or other physical features.



Source: The U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission

FIGURE M–1. Map

WRITER'S CHECKLIST **Creating and Using Maps** (*continued*)

- ✔ Include a scale of miles/kilometers or feet/meters to give your readers an indication of the map's proportions.
- ✔ Indicate which direction is north with an arrow or a compass symbol.
- ✔ Emphasize key features by using color, shading, dots, crosshatching, or other appropriate symbols.
- ✔ Include a key, or legend, that explains what the different colors, shadings, or symbols represent.

WEB LINK	Maps and Mapping Information
The University of Texas Libraries offer a useful site with links to online maps and other types of mapping and cartographic resources. See ***bedfordstmartins.com/alred*** and select *Links for Handbook Entries*.	

mathematical equations

You can appropriately present mathematical equations and make them easy to read by following consistent standards throughout a document. Mathematicians often use scientific software packages to prepare and format research articles and reports with mathematical equations. Some scientific journals, in fact, require documents to be written with software packages such as LaTeX, Scientific Workplace, AMSTeX, or similar versions of TeX (*www.latex-project.org*). Unless you need to follow such specific styles or specifications, the guidelines in this entry should serve you well.

Formatting Equations

Set short and simple equations, such as $x(y) = y^2 + 3y + 2$, as part of the running text rather than displaying them on separate lines, as long as an equation does not appear at the beginning of a sentence. If a document contains multiple equations, identify them with numbers, as the following example shows:

$$x(y) = y^2 + 3y + 2 \qquad (1)$$

Number displayed equations consecutively throughout the work. Place the equation number, in parentheses, at the right margin of the same line as the equation (or of the first line if the equation runs longer than one line). Leave at least four spaces between the equation and the equation number. Refer to displayed equations by number, for example, as "Equation 1" or "Eq. 1."

Positioning Displayed Equations

Equations that are set off from the text need to be surrounded by space. Triple-space between displayed equations and normal text. Double-space between one equation and another and between the lines of multiline equations. Count space above the equation from the uppermost character in the equation; count space below from the lowermost character.

Type displayed equations either at the left margin or indented five spaces from the left margin, depending on their length. When a series of short equations is displayed in sequence, align them on the equal signs.

$$p(x,y) = \sin(x + y) \tag{2}$$
$$p(x,y) = \sin x \cos y + \cos x \sin y \tag{3}$$
$$p(x_0, y_0) = \sin x_0 \cos y_0 + \cos x_0 \sin y_0 \tag{4}$$
$$q(x,y) = \cos(x + y) \tag{5}$$
$$= \cos x \cos y - \sin x \sin y$$
$$q(x_0, y_0) = \cos x_0 \cos y_0 - \sin x_0 \sin y_0 \tag{6}$$

Break an equation that requires two lines at the equal sign, carrying the equal sign over to the second portion of the equation.

$$\begin{aligned} &{}_0\textstyle\int^1 (f_n - \frac{y}{r} f_n)^2 \, r \, dr + 2n \, {}_0\textstyle\int^1 f_n f_n dr \\ &= {}_0\textstyle\int^1 (f_n - \frac{y}{r} f_n)^2 \, r \, dr + n f_n^2(1) \end{aligned} \tag{7}$$

If you cannot break an equation at the equal sign, break it at a plus or minus sign that is not in **parentheses** or **brackets**. Bring the plus or minus sign to the next line of the equation, which should be positioned to end near the right margin of the equation.

$$\begin{aligned} \phi(x, y, z) = (x^2 + y^2 + z^2)^{1/2} (x - y + z) (x + y - z)^2 \\ - [f(x, y, z) - 3x^2] \end{aligned} \tag{8}$$

The next best place to break an equation is between parentheses or brackets that indicate multiplication of two major elements.

For equations that require more than two lines, start the first line at the left margin, end the last line at the right margin (or four spaces to the left of the equation's number), and center intermediate lines between the margins. Whenever possible, break equations at operational signs, parentheses, or brackets.

Omit punctuation after displayed equations, even when they end a sentence and even when a key list of defining terms follows (for example, P = pressure, psf; V = volume, cu ft; T = temperature, °C). Punctuation may be used before an equation, however, depending on the grammatical construction.

The term $(n)_r$ may be written in a more familiar way by using the following algebraic device:

$$(n)_r = \frac{(n)(n-1)(n-2)\ldots(n-r+1)(n-r)(n-r-1)\ldots 3 \cdot 2 \cdot 1}{(n-4)(n-r-1)\ldots 3 \cdot 2 \cdot 1} \tag{9}$$
$$= \frac{n!}{(n-r)!}$$

maybe / may be

Maybe (one word) is an **adverb** meaning "perhaps." ("*Maybe* the legal staff can resolve this issue.") *May be* (two words) is a **verb** phrase. ("It *may be* necessary to hire a specialist.")

media / medium

Media is the plural of *medium* and should always be used with a plural **verb**.

- Many communication *media are* available today.
- The Internet *is* a multifaceted *medium*.

meetings

Meetings allow people to share information and collaborate to produce better results than exchanges of **e-mail** messages or other means would allow. Like a **presentation**, a successful meeting requires planning and preparation. See also **selecting the medium**.

Planning a Meeting

Begin by determining the focus of the meeting, deciding who should attend, and choosing the best time and place to hold it. Prepare an agenda for the meeting and determine who should take the minutes.

Determine the Purpose of the Meeting. The first step in planning a meeting is to focus on the desired outcome by asking questions to help you determine the meeting's **purpose**: What should participants know, believe, do, or be able to do as a result of attending the meeting?

Once you have your desired outcome in focus, use the information to write a purpose statement for the meeting that answers the questions *what* and *why*.

- The purpose of this meeting is to gather ideas from the sales force [*what*] in order to create a successful sales campaign for our new security scanner [*why*].

Decide Who Should Attend. Determine first the key people who need to attend the meeting. If a meeting must be held without some key participants, ask those people for their contributions prior to the meeting or invite them to participate by speakerphone, videoconference, or such remote methods as described in *Digital Tip: Conducting Online Meetings* on page 342. Of course, the meeting minutes should be distributed to everyone, including appropriate nonattendees.

Choose the Meeting Time. Schedule a meeting for a time when all or most of the key people can be present. Consider as well other factors, such as time of day and the length of the meeting, that can influence its outcome:

- Monday morning is often a time people use to prepare for the coming week's work.
- Friday afternoon is often when people focus on completing the current week's tasks.
- Long meetings may need to include breaks to allow participants to respond to messages and refresh themselves.
- Meetings held during the last 15 minutes of the day will be quick, but few people will remember what happened.
- Remote participants may need consideration for their time zones.

DIGITAL TIP

Scheduling Meetings Online

If you are responsible for scheduling meetings, you can simplify the process by using the advanced features of your organization's calendar application or using one of several free online scheduling tools. For a list of these tools and tips for scheduling meetings more effectively, go to ***bedfordstmartins.com/alred*** and select *Digital Tips*, "Scheduling Meetings Online."

Choose the Meeting Location. Having a meeting at your own location can give you an advantage: You feel more comfortable while your guests are new to the surroundings. Holding the meeting on someone else's premises, however, can signal cooperation. For balance, especially

when people are meeting for the first time or are discussing sensitive issues, meet at a neutral site where no one gains an advantage and attendees may feel freer to participate.

DIGITAL TIP

Conducting Online Meetings

When participants cannot meet face to face, consider holding an online videoconference. In such meetings, the participants use an application on their computers to connect with other computers running the same application. Many of these applications are free or inexpensive, but all participants will need computers with high-speed Internet connections and webcams. For a list of software programs that support videoconferencing and tips for running a successful videoconference, see ***bedfordstmartins.com/alred*** and select *Digital Tips*, "Conducting Online Meetings."

Establish the Agenda. A tool for focusing the group, the agenda is an outline of what the meeting will address. Figure M–2 shows a typical agenda. Always prepare an agenda for a meeting, even if it is only an informal list of main topics. Ideally, the agenda should be distributed to attendees a day or two before the meeting. For a longer meeting in which participants are required to make a presentation, try to distribute the agenda a week or more in advance.

Design Meeting Agenda

Purpose:	To get creative ideas for the CZX software
Date:	Wednesday, May 16, 2012
Place:	Conference Room E
Time:	9:30 a.m.–11:00 a.m.
Attendees:	New Products Manager, Software Engineering Manager and Designers, Technical Publications Manager, Technical Training Manager

Topic	Presenter	Time
CZX Software	Bob Arbuckle	9:30–9:45
The Campaign	Maria Lopez	9:45–10:00
The Design Strategy	Mary Winifred	10:00–10:15
Discussion	Led by Dave Grimes	10:15–11:00

FIGURE M–2. Meeting Agenda

The agenda should list the attendees, the meeting time and place, and the topics you plan to discuss. If the meeting includes presentations, list the time allotted for each speaker. Finally, indicate an approximate length for the meeting so that participants can plan the rest of their day.

If the agenda is distributed in advance of the meeting, it should be accompanied by a **cover letter** or message informing people of the following:

- The purpose of the meeting
- The date and place of the meeting
- The meeting start and stop times
- The names of the people invited
- Instructions on how to prepare

Figure M–3 shows a cover message to accompany an agenda.

Assign the Minute-Taking. Delegate the minute-taking to someone other than the leader. The minute-taker should record major decisions made and tasks assigned. To avoid misunderstandings, the minute-taker needs to record each assignment, the person responsible for it, and the date on which it is due.

For a standing committee, it is best to rotate the responsibility of taking minutes. See also **minutes of meetings** and **note-taking**.

Conducting the Meeting

Assign someone to write on a board or project a computer image of information that needs to be viewed by everyone present.

During the meeting, keep to your agenda; however, create a productive environment by allowing room for differing views and fostering an environment in which participants listen respectfully to one another.

- Consider the feelings, thoughts, ideas, and needs of others—do not let your own agenda blind you to other points of view.
- Help other participants feel valued and respected by **listening** to them and responding to what they say.
- Respond positively to the comments of others whenever possible.
- Consider communication styles and approaches that are different from your own, particularly those from other cultures. See also **global communication**.

Deal with Conflict. Despite your best efforts, conflict is inevitable. However, conflict is potentially valuable; when managed positively, it can stimulate creative thinking by challenging complacency and

From: "E. Lauter" <elauter@mmsoftware.com>
To: "R. Arbuckle" <arbuckle@mmsoftware.com>,
"D. Grimes" <dgrimes@mmsoftware.com>,
"M. Lopez" <mlopez@mmsoftware.com>,
"M. Winifred" <mwinifred@mmsoftware.com>,
"Design" <design_all@mmsoftware.com>
Sent: Fri, 11 May 2012
Subject: Design Meeting (May 16 at 9:30 a.m.)
Attachments: Meeting Agenda.doc (29 KB)

Purpose of the Meeting

The purpose of this meeting is to get your ideas for our new CZX software.

Date, Time, and Location

Date: Wednesday, May 16, 2012
Time: 9:30 a.m.–11:00 a.m.
Place: Conference Room E (go to the ground floor, take a right off the elevator, third door on the left)

Attendees

Those addressed above to attend.

Meeting Preparation

Everyone should be prepared to offer suggestions on the following topics:

- Features of the new software
- Techniques for designing the software
- Customer profile of potential buyers
- FAQs—questions customers may ask

Agenda

Please see the attached document.

FIGURE M–3. E-mail to Accompany an Agenda

showing ways to achieve goals more efficiently or economically. See collaborative writing.

Members of any group are likely to vary in their personalities and attitudes, and you may encounter people who approach meetings differently. Consider the following tactics for the interruptive, negative, rambling, overly quiet, and territorial personality types.

- The *interruptive person* rarely lets anyone finish a sentence and may intimidate the group's quieter members. Tell that person in a

firm but nonhostile tone to let the others finish in the interest of getting everyone's input. By addressing the issue directly, you signal to the group the importance of putting common goals first.

- The *negative person* has difficulty accepting change and often considers a new idea or project from a negative point of view. Such negativity, if left unchecked, can demoralize the group and suppress enthusiasm for new ideas. If the negative person brings up a valid point, however, ask for the group's suggestions to remedy the issue being raised. If the negative person's reactions are not valid or are outside the agenda, state the necessity of staying focused on the agenda and perhaps recommend a separate meeting to address those issues.
- The *rambling person* cannot collect his or her thoughts quickly enough to verbalize them succinctly. Restate or clarify this person's ideas. Try to strike a balance between providing your own interpretation and drawing out the person's intended meaning.
- The *overly quiet person* may be timid or may just be deep in thought. Ask for this person's thoughts, being careful not to embarrass the person. In some cases, you can have a quiet person jot down his or her thoughts and give them to you later.
- The *territorial person* fiercely defends his or her group against real or perceived threats and may refuse to cooperate with members of other departments, companies, and so on. Point out that although such concerns may be valid, everyone is working toward the same overall goal and that goal should take precedence.

Close the Meeting. Just before closing the meeting, review all decisions and assignments. Paraphrase each to help the group focus on what individual participants have agreed to do and to ensure that the minutes will be complete and accurate. Now is the time to raise questions and clarify any misunderstandings. Set a date by which everyone at the meeting can expect to receive copies of the minutes. Finally, thank everyone for participating, and close the meeting on a positive note.

WRITER'S CHECKLIST **Planning and Conducting Meetings**

- ✔ Develop a purpose statement for the meeting to focus your planning.
- ✔ Invite only those essential to fulfilling the purpose of the meeting.
- ✔ Select a time and place convenient to all those attending.
- ✔ Create an agenda and distribute it at least a day or two before the meeting.

(*continued*)

WRITER'S CHECKLIST **Planning and Conducting Meetings** (*continued*)

- ✔ Assign someone to take meeting minutes.
- ✔ Ensure that the minutes record key decisions; assignments; due dates; and the date, time, and location of any follow-up meeting.
- ✔ Follow the agenda to keep everyone focused.
- ✔ Respect the views of others and how they are expressed.
- ✔ Use the strategies in this entry for handling conflict and attendees whose style of expression may prevent getting everyone's best thinking.
- ✔ Close the meeting by reviewing key decisions and assignments.

memos

Memos are documents that use a standard form (*To:*, *From:*, *Date:*, *Subject:*) whether sent on paper or as an attachment to an **e-mail**. They may be used within organizations for routine correspondence, short reports, proposals, and other internal documents.

Even in organizations where e-mail messages have largely taken the function of memos, a printed or an attached memo with organizational letterhead can communicate with formality and authority in addition to offering the full range of word-processing features. Paper memos are also useful in manufacturing and service industries, as well as in other businesses where employees do not have easy access to e-mail. For a discussion of writing strategies for memos, e-mail, and **letters**, see **correspondence**. See also **selecting the medium**.

Memo Format

The memo shown in Figure M–4 illustrates a typical memo format. As this example illustrates, the use of **headings** and **lists** often fosters **clarity** and provides **emphasis** in memos. For a discussion of subject lines, see page 113.

◖ PROFESSIONALISM NOTE As with e-mail, be alert to the practices of addressing and distributing memos in your organization. Consider who should receive or needs to be copied on a memo and in what order—senior managers, for example, take precedence over junior managers. If rank does not apply, alphabetizing recipients by last name is safe. ◗

Some organizations ask writers to initial or sign printed memos to verify that the writer accepts responsibility for a memo's content. Electronic copies of memos do not include simulated initials.

Professional Publishing Services

MEMORANDUM

TO: Barbara Smith, Publications Manager

FROM: Hannah Kaufman, Vice President HK

DATE: April 11, 2012

SUBJECT: Schedule for ACM Electronics Brochures

ACM Electronics has asked us to prepare a comprehensive set of brochures for its Milwaukee office by August 10, 2012. We have worked with similar firms in the past, so this job should be relatively easy to prepare. I estimate that the job will take nearly two months. Ted Harris has requested time and cost estimates for the project. Fred Moore in production will prepare the cost estimates, and I would like you to prepare a tentative schedule for the project.

Additional Personnel

In preparing the schedule, check the status of the following:

- Production schedule for all staff writers
- Availability of freelance writers
- Availability of dependable graphic designers

Ordinarily, we would not need to depend on outside personnel; however, because our bid for the *Wall Street Journal* special project is still under consideration, we could be short of staff in June and July. Further, we have to consider vacations that have already been approved.

Time Estimates

Please give me time estimates by April 17. A successful job done on time will give us a good chance to obtain the contract to do ACM Electronics' annual report for its stockholders' meeting this fall.

I have enclosed several brochures that may be helpful.

cc: Ted Harris, President
Fred Moore, Production Editor

Enclosures: Sample Brochures

FIGURE M–4. Typical Memo Format (Printed with Sender's Handwritten Initials)

Additional Pages

When memos require more than one page, use a second-page header and always carry at least two lines of the body text over to that page. The header should include either the recipient's name or an abbreviated subject line (if there are too many names to fit), the page number, and the date. Place the header in the upper left-hand corner or across the page, as shown in Figure M–5.

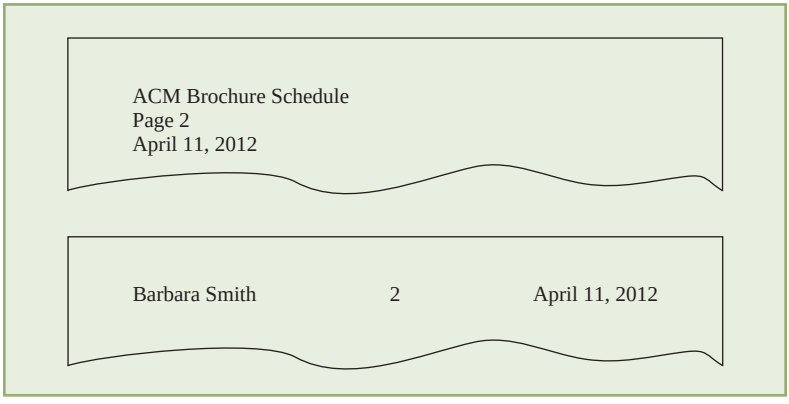


FIGURE M–5. Alternative Headers for the Second Page of Memos

WEB LINK	Writing Memos
For links to articles about when to write memos and tips for following organization protocol, see ***bedfordstmartins.com/alred*** and select *Links for Handbook Entries*.	

methods of development

A logical method of development satisfies the readers' need for shape and structure in a document, whether it is an **e-mail**, a **report**, or a Web page. It helps you as a writer move smoothly and logically from the **introduction** to a **conclusion**.

Choose the method or, as is often the case, a combination of methods that best suits your subject, **audience**, and **purpose**. Following are the most common methods, each of which is discussed in further detail in its own entry.

- **Cause-and-effect method of development** begins with either the cause or the effect of an event. This approach can be used to develop a report that offers a solution to a problem, beginning with the problem and moving on to the solution or vice versa.
- **Chronological method of development** emphasizes the time element of a sequence, as in a **trouble report** that traces events as they occurred in time.
- **Comparison method of development** is useful when writing about a new topic that is in many ways similar to another topic that is more familiar to your readers.
- **Definition method of development** extends definitions with additional details, examples, comparisons, or other explanatory devices. See also **defining terms**.
- **Division-and-classification method of development** either separates a whole into component parts and discusses each part separately (*division*) or groups parts into categories that clarify the relationship of the parts (*classification*).
- **General and specific methods of development** proceed either from general information to specific details or from specific information to a general conclusion.
- **Order-of-importance method of development** presents information in either decreasing order of importance, as in a **proposal** that begins with the most important point, or increasing order of importance, as in a **presentation** that ends with the most important point.
- **Sequential method of development** emphasizes the order of elements in a process and is particularly useful when writing step-by-step **instructions**.
- **Spatial method of development** describes the physical appearance of an object or area from top to bottom, inside to outside, front to back, and so on.

Rarely does a writer rely on only one of these methods. Documents often blend methods of development. For example, in a report that describes the organization of a company, you might use elements from three methods of development. You could divide the larger topic (the company) into operations (division and classification), arrange the operations according to what you see as their impact within the company (order of importance), and present their manufacturing operations in the order they occur (sequential). As this example illustrates, when outlining a document, you may base your major division on one primary method of development appropriate to your purpose and then subordinate other methods to it.

minutes of meetings

Organizations and committees refer to official records of their **meetings** as *minutes*. Because minutes are often used to record decisions and to settle disputes, they must be accurate, complete, and clear. When approved, minutes of meetings are official and can be used as evidence in legal proceedings. A section from the minutes of a meeting is shown in Figure M–6.

Keep your minutes brief and to the point. Except for recording formally presented motions, which must be transcribed word for word, summarize what occurs and paraphrase discussions. To keep the minutes concise, follow a set format, and use **headings** for each major point discussed. See also **note-taking**.

Avoid abstractions and generalities; always be specific. Refer to everyone in the same way—a lack of consistency in titles or names may suggest a deference to one person at the expense of another. Avoid **adjectives** and **adverbs** that suggest good or bad qualities, as in "Mr. Sturgess's

NORTH TAMPA MEDICAL CENTER

Minutes of the Monthly Meeting
Medical Audit Committee

DATE: June 25, 2012

PRESENT: G. Miller (Chair), C. Bloom, J. Dades, K. Gilley, D. Ingoglia (Secretary), S. Ramirez

ABSENT: D. Rowan, C. Tsien, C. Voronski, R. Fautier, R. Wolf

Dr. Gail Miller called the meeting to order at 12:45 p.m. Dr. David Ingoglia made a motion that the June 4, 2012, minutes be approved as distributed. The motion was seconded and passed.

The committee discussed and took action on the following topics.

(1) TOPIC: Meeting Time

Discussion: The most convenient time for the committee to meet.
Action taken: The committee decided to meet on the fourth Tuesday of every month, at 12:30 p.m.

FIGURE M–6. Minutes of a Meeting (Partial Section)

capable assistant read the *comprehensive* report to the subcommittee." Minutes should be objective and impartial.

If a member of the committee is to follow up on something and report back to the committee at its next meeting, clearly state the person's name and the responsibility he or she has accepted.

WRITER'S CHECKLIST **Items to Include in Minutes of Meetings**

- ✔ The name of the group or committee holding the meeting
- ✔ The topic of the meeting
- ✔ The kind of meeting (a regular meeting or a special meeting called to discuss a specific subject or problem)
- ✔ The number of members present and, for committees or boards of ten or fewer members, the names of those present and absent
- ✔ The place, time, and date of the meeting
- ✔ A statement that the chair and the secretary were present or the names of any substitutes
- ✔ A statement that the minutes of the previous meeting were approved or revised
- ✔ A list of any reports that were read and approved
- ✔ All the main motions that were made, with statements as to whether they were carried, defeated, or tabled (vote postponed), and the names of those who made and seconded the motions (motions that were withdrawn are not mentioned)
- ✔ A full description of resolutions that were adopted and a simple statement of any that were rejected
- ✔ A record of all ballots with the number of votes cast for and against resolutions
- ✔ The time the meeting was adjourned (officially ended) and the place, time, and date of the next meeting
- ✔ The recording secretary's signature and typed name and, if desired, the signature of the chairperson

mixed constructions

A mixed construction is a sentence in which the elements do not sensibly fit together. The problem may be a **grammar** error, a **logic error**, or both.

- Because the copier wouldn't start ~~explains why~~ we called a technician.

The original sentence mixes a subordinate **clause** (*Because the copier wouldn't start*) with a **verb** (*explains*) that attempts to incorrectly use the subordinate clause as its subject. The revision correctly uses the **pronoun** *we* as the subject of the main clause. See also **sentence construction**.

modifiers

Modifiers are words, phrases, or clauses that expand, limit, or make otherwise more specific the meaning of other elements in a sentence. Although we can create sentences without modifiers, we often need the detail and clarification they provide.

WITHOUT MODIFIERS	Production decreased.
WITH MODIFIERS	*Glucose* production decreased *rapidly*.

Most modifiers function as **adjectives** or **adverbs**. Adjectives describe qualities or impose boundaries on the words they modify.

- *noisy* machinery, *ten* files, *this* printer, *a* workstation

An adverb modifies an adjective, another adverb, a **verb**, or an entire **clause**.

- Under test conditions, the brake pad showed *much* less wear than it did under actual conditions.
  [The adverb *much* modifies the adjective *less*.]
- The redesigned brake pad lasted *much* longer.
  [The adverb *much* modifies another adverb, *longer*.]
- The wrecking ball hit the wall of the building *hard*.
  [The adverb *hard* modifies the verb *hit*.]
- *Surprisingly*, the motor failed even after all the durability and performance tests it had passed.
  [The adverb *surprisingly* modifies an entire clause.]

Adverbs are **intensifiers** when they increase the impact of adjectives (*very* fine, *too* high) or adverbs (*very* slowly, *rather* quickly). Be cau-

tious using intensifiers; their overuse can lead to vagueness and a resulting lack of precision.

Stacked (Jammed) Modifiers

Stacked (or jammed) modifiers are strings of modifiers preceding **nouns** that make writing unclear or difficult to read.

- Your *staffing-level authorization reassessment* plan should result in a major improvement.

The noun *plan* is preceded by three long modifiers, a string that forces the reader to slow down to interpret its meaning. Stacked modifiers often result from a tendency to overuse **buzzwords** or **jargon**. See how breaking up the stacked modifiers makes the example easier to read.

- Your plan for reassessing the staffing-level authorizations should result in a major improvement.

Misplaced Modifiers

A modifier is misplaced when it modifies the wrong word or phrase. A misplaced modifier can cause **ambiguity**.

- We *almost* lost all of the files.
  [The files were *almost* lost but were not.]
- We lost *almost* all of the files.
  [Most of the files were in fact lost.]

To avoid ambiguity, place modifiers as close as possible to the words they are intended to modify. Note the two meanings possible when the phrase is shifted in the following sentences:

- The equipment *without the accessories* sold the best.
  [Different types of equipment were available, some with and some without accessories.]
- The equipment sold the best *without the accessories*.
  [One type of equipment was available, and the accessories were optional.]

Place clauses as close as possible to the words they modify.

REMOTE We sent the brochure to several local firms *that had four-color art*.

CLOSE We sent the brochure *that had four-color art* to several local firms.

Squinting Modifiers

A squinting modifier is one that can be interpreted as modifying either of two sentence elements simultaneously, thereby confusing readers about which is intended. See also **dangling modifiers**.

- We agreed *on the next day* to make the adjustments.
  [Did they agree *to make the adjustments* on the next day? Or *on the next day*, did they agree to make the adjustments?]

A squinting modifier can sometimes be corrected simply by changing its position, but often it is better to rewrite the sentence.

- We agreed that *on the next day* we would make the adjustments.
  [The adjustments were to be made *on the next day*.]
- *On the next day*, we agreed that we would make the adjustments.
  [The agreement was made *on the next day*.]

mood

The grammatical term *mood* refers to the **verb** functions that indicate whether the verb is intended to make a statement, ask a question, give a command, or express a hypothetical possibility.

The *indicative mood* states a fact, gives an opinion, or asks a question.

- The setting *is* correct.
- *Is* the setting correct?

The *imperative mood* expresses a command, suggestion, request, or plea. In the imperative mood, the implied subject *you* is not expressed. ("*Install* the system today.")

The *subjunctive mood* expresses something that is contrary to fact or that is conditional, hypothetical, or purely imaginative; it can also express a wish, a doubt, or a possibility. In the subjunctive mood, *were* is used instead of *was* in clauses that speculate about the present or future, and the base form (*be*) is used following certain verbs, such as *propose*, *request*, or *insist*. See also progressive **tense**.

- If we *were* to finish the tests today, we would be ahead of schedule.
- The research director insisted that she [I, you, we, they] *be* the project leader.

The most common use of the subjunctive mood is to express clearly that the writer considers a condition to be contrary to fact. If the condition is not considered to be contrary to fact, use the indicative mood.

SUBJUNCTIVE	If I *were* president of the firm, I would change several hiring policies.
INDICATIVE	Although I *am* president of the firm, I don't control every aspect of its policies.

ESL TIPS for Determining Mood

In written and especially in spoken English, the tendency increasingly is to use the indicative mood where the subjunctive traditionally has been used. Note the differences between traditional and contemporary usage in the following examples.

Traditional (formal) use of the subjunctive mood

- I wish he *were* here now.
- If I *were* going to the conference, I would travel with him.
- I requested that she *show* up on time.

Contemporary (informal) use of the indicative mood

- I wish he *was* here now.
- If I *was* going to the conference, I would travel with him.
- I requested that she *shows* up on time.

In professional writing, it is better to use the more traditional expressions.

Ms. / Miss / Mrs.

Ms. is used in business and public life to address or refer to a woman. Traditionally, *Miss* is used to refer to an unmarried woman, and *Mrs.* is used to refer to a married woman. Some women may indicate a preference for *Ms.*, *Miss*, or *Mrs.*, which you should honor. If a woman has an academic or a professional title, use the appropriate form of address (*Doctor*, *Professor*, *Captain*) instead of *Ms.*, *Miss*, or *Mrs.* See also biased language.

mutual / common

Common is used when two or more persons (or things) share something or possess it jointly.

- We have a *common* desire to make the program succeed.
- The fore and aft guidance assemblies have a *common* power source.

Mutual may also mean "shared" (*mutual* friend, of *mutual* benefit), but it usually implies something given and received reciprocally and is used with reference to only two persons or parties.

- Melek respects Roth, and from my observations the respect is *mutual*.
  [Roth also respects Melek.]

N

narration

Narration is the presentation of a series of events in a prescribed (often chronological) sequence. Much narrative writing explains how something happened: a laboratory study, a site visit, an accident, the decisions in an important meeting. See also **chronological method of development**, **trip reports**, and **trouble reports**.

Effective narration rests on two key writing techniques: the careful, accurate sequencing of events and a consistent **point of view** on the part of the narrator. Narrative sequence and essential shifts in the sequence are signaled in three ways: chronology (clock and calendar time), transitional words pertaining to time (*before*, *after*, *next*, *first*, *while*, *then*), and verb tenses that indicate whether something has happened (past **tense**) or is under way (present tense). The point of view indicates the writer's relation to the information being narrated as reflected in the use of **person**. Narration usually expresses a first- or third-person point of view. First-person narration indicates that the writer is a participant, and third-person narration indicates that the writer is writing about what happened to someone or something else.

The narrative shown in Figure N–1 reconstructs the chronology of an early-morning accident of Chicago Transit Authority Green Line train run 2. This train struck two signal maintainers who were working near a tower on the section of the Chicago Loop that is above the intersection of Lake and Wells Streets. The Loop is elevated, and one maintainer fell from the structure. The investigators needed to "tell the story" in detail so that any lessons learned could be used to improve safety. To do that, they recount and sequence events as precisely as possible. The verb tenses throughout indicate past action: *approached*, *continued*, *heard*, *removed*, *stopped*.

Although narration often exists in combination with other forms of discourse (**description**, **exposition**, **persuasion**), avoid interrupting a narrative with lengthy explanations or analyses. Explain only what is necessary for readers to follow the events. See **audience**.

The Accident*

On the morning of the accident, two night-shift signal maintainers were repairing a switch at tower 18. Between 4:00 and 4:30 a.m., two day-shift maintainers joined them.[1] As the two crews conferred about the progress of the repair, Green Line train run 1 approached the tower. A trainee was operating the train, and a train operator/line instructor[2] was observing. Both crew members on the train later stated that they had not heard the control center's radioed advisory that workers were on the track structure at tower 18. The line instructor said that as the train approached the tower with a *proceed* (green) signal, he observed wayside maintenance personnel from about 150 feet away and told the trainee to stop the train, which he did. One of the maintainers gave the train a hand signal to proceed, and the train continued on its way. Shortly after the train left, the night-shift maintainers also left.

The day-shift maintainers continued to work. Just before the accident, they removed a defective part and started to install a replacement. According to both men, they were squatting over the switch machine. One was facing the center of the track and attaching wires, while the other was facing the Loop with his back to the normal direction of train movements. He was shining a flashlight on the work area.

The accident train approached the tower on the *proceed* signal. One maintainer later said that he remembered being hit by the train, while the other said that he was hit by "something." A train operator/line instructor was operating the train, and a trainee was observing. Both later said that they had not seen any wayside workers. They said that they had heard noise that the student described as a "thump" in the vicinity of the accident and caught a "glimpse" of something.

Both maintainers later stated that they had not seen or heard the train as it approached. After being struck, one of the maintainers fell from the structure. The other fell to the deck of the platform on the outside of the structure. He used his radio to tell the control center that he and another maintainer had been "hit by the train." Emergency medical personnel were dispatched to the scene, and an ambulance took both men to a local hospital.

In the meantime, the accident train continued past the tower and stopped at the next station, Clark and Lake, where the crew members inspected the train from the platform and found no damage. They continued on their way until they heard the radio report that workers had been struck by a train. They stopped their train at the next station and reported to a supervisor.

According to the operator of the accident train, nothing had distracted her from her duties, and she had been facing forward and watching the track before the train arrived at tower 18. The trainee supported her account. Both crew members said that they had not heard the control center's radioed advisory that workers were on the track structure at tower 18.

[1]All times referred to in this report are central standard time.
[2]Line instructors are working train operators who provide on-the-job training to operator trainees.

**Source*: National Transportation Safety Board, "Railroad Accident Brief: Chicago Transit Authority, DCA-02-FR-005, Chicago, Illinois, February 26, 2002." www.ntsb.gov/publictn/2003/RAB0304.htm

FIGURE N–1. Narration from an Accident Report

nature

Nature, when used to mean "kind" or "sort," is vague. Avoid this usage in your writing. Say exactly what you mean.

exclusionary clause in
▸ The ~~nature of~~ the contract caused the problem.

needless to say

The phrase *needless to say* sometimes occurs in speech and writing. Eliminate the phrase or replace it with a more descriptive **word choice**.

Service logs indicate that
▸ ~~Needless to say,~~ staff reductions have decreased customer loyalty.

newsletter articles

If your organization publishes a **newsletter**, you may be asked to contribute an article on a subject in your area of expertise. In fact, an article is a good way to promote your work or your department.

Before you begin to write, consider the traditional *who*, *what*, *where*, *when*, and *why* of journalism ("*Who* did it? *What* was done? *Where* was it done? *When* was it done? *Why* was it done?") and then add *how*, which may be of as much interest to your colleagues as any of the five *w*'s. Next, determine whether the company has an official policy or position on your subject. If it does, adhere to it as you prepare your article. If there is no company policy, determine your management's attitude toward your subject. See also **audience** and **context**.

Gather several fairly recent issues of the newsletter and study the **style** and **tone** of the writing and the approach used for various kinds of subjects. Understand those perspectives before you begin to work on your own article. Ask yourself the following questions about your subject: What is its significance to the organization? What is its significance to my coworkers? The answers to those questions should help you establish the style, tone, and approach for your article and also heavily influence your conclusion.

Research for a newsletter article frequently consists of **interviewing for information**. Interview key personnel concerned with your subject. Get all available information and all points of view. Be sure to give maximum credit to the maximum number of people by quoting statements from those involved in projects and naming those who have developed initiatives. See also **quotations**.

Figure N–2 shows an article written for *Connection*, a newsletter produced by Ken Cook Company and distributed to current and prospective clients. This article describes how the company developed a print-on-demand technology called media①off™. Notice that the sidebar at the right of the page ("Tech Tools") uses visual elements to draw **readers** to the article as well as giving them a sense of its content. By describing this system, the article aims to demonstrate Ken Cook Company's

Online Solution Speeds Video Delivery

You've probably heard about Google's recent purchase of YouTube for $1.65 billion in a stock-for-stock transaction. YouTube is a popular free video sharing web site which lets users upload, view, and share video clips.

In the six short months following its debut in November 2005, YouTube was ranked the tenth most popular website by Alexa, the Amazon.com-owned subsidiary that tracks web traffic. It's estimated that 20 million visitors log on to YouTube each month.

What the YouTube craze has demonstrated is the increasing success and popularity of video content distribution. Leading manufacturers that maintain a commitment to continuous improvement are also developing video technology channels of distribution to provide training programs for their employees, dealers and customers.

"Equipment manufacturers & others can now offer video libraries, in addition to printed/downloadable text files, on the online bookstores hosted by Ken Cook Co."

Ken Cook Co. realizes this challenge and is committed to providing solutions that meet customer needs and keep pace with the latest breakthroughs in technology. Recognizing that video and animation clips are an instrumental element in training, the company has updated its media①off™ literature fulfillment system to handle video files for "one-off" production.

This means that equipment manufacturers and others can now offer video libraries, in addition to printed/downloadable text files on the online bookstores hosted by Ken Cook Co.

Dealers and end users world-wide are now able to download or burn training videos to DVDs on demand.

These files can be used to demonstrate equipment operation, safety awareness, service and maintenance instructions, sales training, as well as marketing and promotional applications.

With the media①off™ video file solution, the costs associated with warehousing training program VHS, CD or DVD kits no longer exist. There's no need to forecast the amount of orders for these materials, pay for duplication up-front, or store an inventory that may go unused.

Companies that use media①off™ simply drop their video files, along with other support files, onto an ftp site. The system automatically identifies and retrieves those files and adds them to the web-based media①off™ bookstore for immediate acquisition. Files can be updated as often as needed—even daily—so up-to-date materials are available 24/7.

Instructors or students/learners can order training kits and materials online at the time of registration and receive them the next day, improving delivery efficiency and reducing wait times.

Dealers also have instant access to training video libraries, allowing them to order materials to review service techniques, view safety practices and deliver educational lessons fundamental to the job, with just a click of the mouse.

Entertainment's online video content distribution, marked by YouTube's overwhelming success, is gaining popularity due to its ability to provide international access, cost effectiveness and maximum customer value.

Similarly, for manufacturers and other businesses, the Ken Cook Co. media①off™ video library solution puts training elements, such as video and animation files, in the hands of end-users world-wide, saving time and eliminating warehousing costs and achieving best-in-class customer satisfaction.

tech tools

media①off™ functionality now includes the ability to print large system schematics as part of the one-off production process. These schematics have two delivery options including rolled and shipped in tubes or folded and shipped. Schematics and large format images can be printed in sizes ranging all the way up to 500 feet long.

tech tools

The new Print On Demand (POD) print manuals feature utilizes media①off™ to transform manuals containing oversized & color pages into 8.5" x 11" page sizes with color pages automatically converted to black & white patterns. The conversion also includes converting oversized or large format schematics into segmented 8.5" x 11" pages with a preview layout page. Conversion is performed at the time the order is placed & allows customers to track & manage only one file for both full color & POD publications.

FIGURE N–2. Newsletter Article

commitment "to providing solutions that meet customer needs and keep pace with the latest breakthroughs in technology."

WRITER'S CHECKLIST **Writing Newsletter Articles**

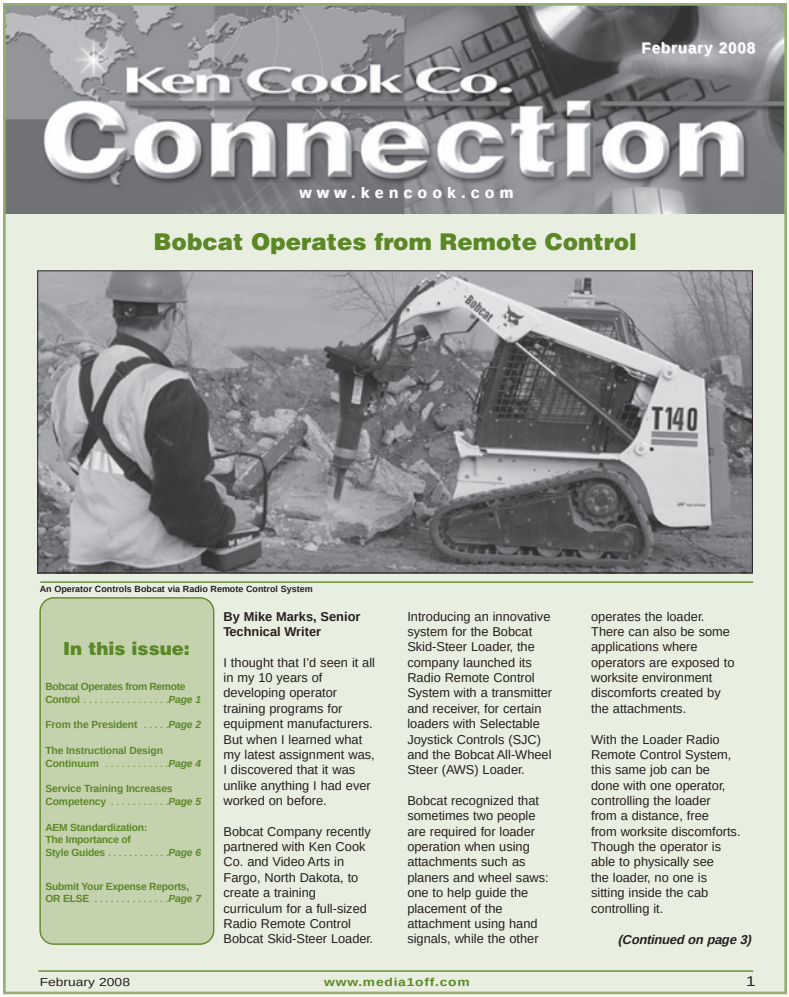
- ✔ Write an intriguing **title** to catch the audience's attention; **rhetorical questions** often work well.
- ✔ Include as many eye-catching **photographs** or other **visuals** as appropriate to entice your audience to read the lead **paragraph** of your **introduction**. See also **layout and design**.
- ✔ Fashion a lead, or first paragraph, that will encourage further reading. The first paragraph generally makes the **transition** from the title to the body of the article.
- ✔ Offer a well-developed presentation of your subject to hold the readers' interest all the way to the end of the article.
- ✔ Write a **conclusion** that emphasizes the significance of your subject to your audience and stresses the points you want your readers to retain. See **emphasis**.
- ✔ Follow the steps listed in the Checklist of the Writing Process on pages xxiii–xxiv as you prepare your newsletter article.

newsletters

Newsletters are designed to inform and to create and sustain interest and membership in an organization. They can also be used to sell products and services. The two main types of newsletters are organizational newsletters and subscription newsletters.

Types of Newsletters

Organizational newsletters like the one shown in Figure N–3 are sent to employees, clients, or members of an association to keep them informed about issues regarding their company or group, such as the development of new products or policies or the accomplishments of individuals or teams. Stories in organizational newsletters can both enhance the image and foster pride among employees of the organization's products or services. For example, Figure N–3 shows how Ken Cook Company partners with cutting-edge companies to produce high-quality training materials.



February 2008

Ken Cook Co.

Connection

www.kencook.com

Bobcat Operates from Remote Control

An Operator Controls Bobcat via Radio Remote Control System

In this issue:

Bobcat Operates from Remote Control . . . . . Page 1
From the President . . . . . Page 2
The Instructional Design Continuum . . . . . Page 4
Service Training Increases Competency . . . . . Page 5
AEM Standardization: The Importance of Style Guides . . . . . Page 6
Submit Your Expense Reports, OR ELSE . . . . . Page 7

By Mike Marks, Senior Technical Writer

I thought that I'd seen it all in my 10 years of developing operator training programs for equipment manufacturers. But when I learned what my latest assignment was, I discovered that it was unlike anything I had ever worked on before.

Bobcat Company recently partnered with Ken Cook Co. and Video Arts in Fargo, North Dakota, to create a training curriculum for a full-sized Radio Remote Control Bobcat Skid-Steer Loader.

Introducing an innovative system for the Bobcat Skid-Steer Loader, the company launched its Radio Remote Control System with a transmitter and receiver, for certain loaders with Selectable Joystick Controls (SJC) and the Bobcat All-Wheel Steer (AWS) Loader.

Bobcat recognized that sometimes two people are required for loader operation when using attachments such as planers and wheel saws: one to help guide the placement of the attachment using hand signals, while the other operates the loader. There can also be some applications where operators are exposed to worksite environment discomforts created by the attachments.

With the Loader Radio Remote Control System, this same job can be done with one operator, controlling the loader from a distance, free from worksite discomforts. Though the operator is able to physically see the loader, no one is sitting inside the cab controlling it.

(Continued on page 3)

FIGURE N–3. Company Newsletter (Front Page)

Subscription newsletters are designed to attract and build a readership interested in buying specific products or services or in learning more about a specific subject. Subscribers are buying information, and they expect value for their money. For example, a person with experience in the stock market could create a financial newsletter and charge subscribers a monthly fee for the investing advice in that newsletter; a person who collects movie memorabilia could create an online newsletter that includes stories about ways to find and sell rare movie posters.

Developing Newsletters

Before you begin to develop a newsletter, decide on its specific **purpose** and the specific **audience** you will be targeting; then make sure the newsletter's appearance and editorial choices create a sense of identification among the readership. Newsletters often involve **collaborative writing** in which different individuals work on design, content, and project management. See also **persuasion**. If you are asked to contribute an article to a newsletter, see **newsletter articles**.

You will need to acquire a mailing list (names and addresses of your readers) and decide on the most strategic way to get the newsletter to these readers (whether through postal mail, interoffice mail, e-mail, or Web posting). Because it can be time-consuming and technically problematic to send out hundreds or thousands of online newsletters by yourself, you may also need to subscribe to an online list-hosting service.*

PROFESSIONALISM NOTE Update your subscriber lists regularly to be sure you are contacting only those who wish to continue receiving your newsletter. You risk damaging your reputation and that of your company if you badger former customers or current clients with unwanted mail. Include an opt-out waiver with each newsletter sent to afford subscribers the opportunity to remove themselves from your mailing list.

Your **research** should include trade journals, business and technology magazines, the Web, and other sources to find specific angles for the articles that will appeal to your select audience. Attempt to provide content that your readers will not find elsewhere, for example, by interviewing and profiling customers, association members, or employees. Check your facts meticulously—newsletter readers are often specialists in their fields. Because newsletters are often distributed to branches and clients abroad, see **global communication** and **global graphics**. See also **interviewing for information**.

As shown in Figures N–2 and N–3, a newsletter's format should be simple and consistent, yet visually appealing to your readership. Use the active **voice** and a conversational **tone**. Use **headings** and bullets to break up the text and make the newsletter easy to read. Keep your sentences simple and paragraphs short. See **conciseness** and **layout and design**.

Using word-processing, desktop-publishing, or Web-development software, create newspaper columns and one or two **visuals** per page that complement the text. On the front page, identify the organization and include the date, volume and issue numbers, and a contents box.

*E-mail list-hosting services have their own servers and provide commercial delivery of premium e-mail that often contains graphic and other digital forms used for advertising.

For Web newsletters, follow the principles of good Web design. See also **layout and design**, **photographs**, and **writing for the Web**.

nominalizations

A nominalization is a **noun** form of a **verb** that is often combined with vague and general (or "weak") verbs like *make*, *do*, *give*, *perform*, and *provide*. Avoid nominalizations when you can use specific verbs that communicate the same idea more directly and concisely.

- The tissue culture tests will ~~give an indication~~ *indicate* if the virus is present.
- The staff should ~~perform an evaluation of~~ *evaluate* the new software.

If you use nominalizations solely to make your writing sound more formal, the result will be **affectation**. You may occasionally have an appropriate use for a nominalization. For example, you might use a nominalization to slow the **pace** of your writing. See also **conciseness**, **technical writing style**, and **voice**.

none

None can be either a singular or a plural **pronoun**, depending on the context. See also **agreement**.

- *None* of the material *has* been ordered.
  [Always use a singular **verb** with a singular **noun**; in this case, "material."]
- *None* of the clients *has* been called yet.
  [Use a singular verb even with a plural noun (*clients*) if the intended emphasis is on the idea of *not one*.]
- *None* of the clients *have* been called yet.
  [Use a plural verb if you intend *none* to refer to all clients.]

For **emphasis**, substitute *no one* or *not one* for *none* and use a singular verb.

- We paid the retail price for three of the machines, ~~none~~ *not one* of which was worth the money.

nor / or

Nor always follows *neither* in sentences with continuing negation. ("They will *neither* support *nor* approve the plan.") Likewise, *or* follows *either* in sentences. ("The firm will accept *either* a short-term *or* a long-term loan.")

Two or more singular subjects joined by *or* or *nor* usually take a singular **verb**. However, when one subject is singular and one is plural, the verb agrees with the subject nearer to it. See also **conjunctions** and **parallel structure**.

SINGULAR	Neither the *architect* nor the *client was* happy with the design.
PLURAL	Neither the *architect* nor the *clients were* happy with the design.
SINGULAR	Neither the *architects* nor the *client was* happy with the design.

note-taking

The purpose of note-taking is to summarize and record information you extract during **research**. The challenge in taking notes is to condense someone else's thoughts into your own words without distorting the original thinking. As you extract information, let your knowledge of the **audience** and the **purpose** of your writing guide you. For taking notes at a meeting, see **minutes of meetings**.

❖ ETHICS NOTE Resist copying your source word for word as you take notes; instead, paraphrase the author's idea or concept. If you only change a few words from a source and incorporate that text into your document, you will be guilty of **plagiarism**. See also **paraphrasing**. ❖

On occasion, when an expert source states something that is especially precise, striking, noteworthy, or that reinforces your point, you can justifiably quote the source directly and incorporate it into your document. If you use a direct quote, enclose the material in **quotation marks** in your notes. In your finished writing, document the source of your quotation. Normally, you will rarely need to quote anything longer than a paragraph. See also **documenting sources** and **quotations**.

When taking notes on abstract ideas, as opposed to factual data, do not sacrifice **clarity** for brevity—notes expressing concepts can lose their meaning if they are too brief. The critical test is whether you can understand the note a week later and recall the significant ideas of the passage. Consider the information in the following paragraph:

> Long before the existence of bacteria was suspected, techniques were in use for combating their influence in, for instance, the decomposition of meat. Salt and heat were known to be effective, and these do in fact kill bacteria or prevent them from multiplying. Salt acts by the osmotic effect of extracting water from the bacterial cell fluid. Bacteria are less easily destroyed by osmotic action than are animal cells because their cell walls are constructed in a totally different way, which makes them much less permeable.

The paragraph says essentially three things:

1. Before the discovery of bacteria, salt and heat were used to combat the effects of bacteria.
2. Salt kills bacteria by extracting water from their cells by osmosis, hence its use in curing meat.
3. Bacteria are less affected by the osmotic effect of salt than are animal cells, because bacterial cell walls are less permeable.

If your readers' needs and your objective involve tracing the origin of the bacterial theory of disease, you might want to note that salt was traditionally used to kill bacteria long before people realized what caused meat to spoil. It might not be necessary to your topic to say anything about the relative permeability of bacterial cell walls.

You should record notes in a way you find efficient. Some find various shareware note and index programs useful. However, jotting notes on 3 5-inch index cards is often more flexible, and the cards are especially useful for **outlining** complex and long-term projects.

WRITER'S CHECKLIST **Taking Notes**

- ✔ Ask yourself the following questions: What information do I need to fulfill my purpose? What are the needs of my audience?
- ✔ Record only the most important ideas and concepts. Be sure to record all vital names, dates, and definitions.
- ✔ When in doubt about whether to take a note, consider the difficulty of finding the source again should you want it later.
- ✔ Use direct or indirect quotations when sources state something that is precise, striking, or noteworthy or that succinctly reinforces a point you are making.
- ✔ Give proper credit. Record the author; title; publisher; place; page number; URL; and date of publication, posting, or retrieval. (On subsequent notes from the same source, include only the author and page number or URL.)

WRITER'S CHECKLIST **Taking Notes** (*continued*)

- ✔ Use your own shorthand and record notes in a way that you find efficient, whether in an electronic document or on index cards.
- ✔ Photocopy or download pages and highlight passages that you intend to quote.
- ✔ Check your notes for accuracy against the original material before moving on to another source.

nouns

DIRECTORY

Types of Nouns 367
Noun Functions 368
Collective Nouns 368
Plural Nouns 369

A noun is a **part of speech** that names a person, a place, a thing, a concept, an action, or a quality.

Types of Nouns

The two basic types of nouns are proper nouns and common nouns. *Proper nouns*, which are capitalized, name specific people, places, and things (*H. G. Wells*, *Boston*, *United Nations*, *Nobel Prize*). See also **capitalization**.

Common nouns, which are not capitalized unless they begin sentences or appear in **titles**, name general classes or categories of persons, places, things, concepts, actions, and qualities (*writer*, *city*, *organization*, *award*). Common nouns include collective nouns, concrete nouns, abstract nouns, count nouns, and mass nouns.

Collective nouns are common nouns that indicate a group or collection. They are plural in meaning but singular in form (*audience*, *jury*, *brigade*, *staff*, *committee*). (See the subsection Collective Nouns on page 368 for advice on using singular or plural forms with collective nouns.)

Concrete nouns are common nouns used to identify those things that can be discerned by the five senses (*paper*, *keyboard*, *glue*, *nail*, *grease*).

Abstract nouns are common nouns that name ideas, qualities, or concepts that cannot be discerned by the five senses (*loyalty*, *pride*, *valor*, *peace*, *devotion*).

Count nouns are concrete nouns that identify things that can be separated into countable units (*desks*, *envelopes*, *printers*, *pencils*, *books*).

Mass nouns are concrete nouns that identify things that cannot be separated into countable units (*water*, *air*, *electricity*, *oil*, *cement*). See also **English as a second language**.

Noun Functions

Nouns function as subjects of **verbs**, direct and indirect objects of verbs and **prepositions**, subjective and objective **complements**, or **appositives**.

- The *metal* failed during the test. [subject]
- The bricklayer cemented the *blocks* efficiently. [direct object of a verb]
- The state presented our *department* a safety award. [indirect object]
- The event occurred within the *year*. [object of a preposition]
- A dynamo is a *generator*. [subjective complement]
- The regional manager was appointed *chairperson*. [objective complement]
- Philip Garcia, the *treasurer*, gave his report last. [appositive]

Words normally used as nouns can also be used as **adjectives** and **adverbs**.

- It is *company* policy. [adjective]
- He went *home*. [adverb]

Collective Nouns

When a collective noun refers to a group as a whole, it takes a singular verb and pronoun.

- The staff *was* divided on the issue and could not reach *its* decision until May 15.

When a collective noun refers to individuals within a group, it takes a plural verb and pronoun.

- The staff *have returned* to *their* offices after the conference.

A better way to emphasize the individuals on the staff would be to use the phrase *the staff members*.

- The staff members *have returned* to *their* offices after the conference.

Treat organization names and titles as singular.

- LRM Associates *has* grown 30 percent in the last three years; *it* will move to a new facility in January.

Plural Nouns

Most nouns form the plural by adding *-s* (*dolphin/dolphins*, *pencil/pencils*). Nouns ending in *ch*, *s*, *sh*, *x*, and *z* form the plural by adding *-es*.

- search/searches, glass/glasses, wish/wishes, six/sixes, buzz/buzzes

Nouns that end in a consonant plus *y* form the plural by changing the *y* to *-ies* (*delivery/deliveries*). Some nouns ending in *o* add *-es* to form the plural, but others add only *-s* (*tomato/tomatoes*, *dynamo/dynamos*). Some nouns ending in *f* or *fe* add *-s* to form the plural; others change the *f* or *fe* to *-ves*.

- cliff/cliffs, cafe/cafes, hoof/hooves, knife/knives

Some nouns require an internal change to form the plural.

- woman/women, man/men, mouse/mice, goose/geese

Some nouns do not change in the plural form.

- many *fish*, several *deer*, fifty *sheep*

Some nouns remain in the plural form whether singular or plural.

- headquarters, means, series, crossroads

Hyphenated and open compound nouns form the plural in the main word.

- sons-in-law, high schools, editors in chief

Compound nouns written as one word add *-s* to the end (two *tablespoonfuls*).

If you are unsure of the proper usage, check a dictionary. See **possessive case** for a discussion of how nouns form possessives.

number (grammar)

Number is the grammatical property of **nouns**, **pronouns**, and **verbs** that signifies whether one thing (singular) or more than one (plural) is being referred to. (See also **agreement**.) Nouns normally form the plural by simply adding *-s* or *-es* to their singular forms.

- *Partners* in successful *businesses* are not always personal friends.

Some nouns require an internal change to form the plural.

- woman/women, man/men, goose/geese, mouse/mice

All pronouns except *you* change internally to form the plural.

- I/we, he/they, she/they, it/they

By adding *-s* or *-es*, most verbs show the singular of the third **person**, present **tense**, indicative **mood**.

- he *stands*, she *works*, it *goes*

The verb *be* normally changes form to indicate the plural.

SINGULAR I *am* ready to begin work.
PLURAL We *are* ready to begin work.

See also **agreement**.

numbers

DIRECTORY

Numerals or Words 370
Plurals 371
Measurements 371
Fractions 371
Money 371
Time 372
Dates 373
Addresses 373
Documents 373

The standards for using numbers vary; however, unless you are following an organizational or a professional style manual, observe the following guidelines.

Numerals or Words

Write numbers from zero through ten as words, and write numbers above ten as numerals.

- I rehearsed my presentation *three* times.
- The association added *152* new members.

Spell out numbers that begin a sentence, however, even if they would otherwise be written as numerals.

- *One hundred and fifty-two* new members joined the association.

If spelling out such a number seems awkward, rewrite the sentence so that the number does not appear at the beginning ("We added *152* new members").

Spell out approximate and round numbers.

- We've had *more than a thousand* requests this month.

In most writing, spell out small ordinal numbers, which express degree or sequence (*first*, *second*; but *27th*, *42nd*), when they are single words (*our nineteenth year*), or when they modify a century (*the twenty-first century*). However, avoid ordinal numbers in **dates** (use *March 30* or *30 March*, not *March 30th*).

Plurals

Indicate the plural of numerals by adding *-s* (*7s*, *the late 1990s*). Form the plural of a written number (like any noun) by adding *-s* or *-es* or by dropping the *y* and adding *-ies* (*elevens*, *sixes*, *twenties*). See also **apostrophes**.

Measurements

Express units of measurement as numerals (*3 miles*, *45 cubic feet*, *9 meters*). When numbers run together in the same phrase, write one as a numeral and the other as a word.

- The order was for ~~12 6-foot tables~~. 12 six-foot tables.

Generally give percentages as numerals and write out the word *percent*. ("Approximately *85 percent* of the land has been sold.") However, in a **table**, use a numeral followed by the percent symbol (*85%*).

Fractions

Express fractions as numerals when they are written with whole numbers (*27 1/2 inches*, *4 1/4 miles*). Spell out fractions when they are expressed without a whole number (*one-fourth*, *seven-eighths*). Always write decimal numbers as numerals (*5.21 meters*).

Money

In general, use numerals to express exact or approximate amounts of money.

- We need to charge *$28.95* per unit.
- The new system costs *$60,000*.

Use words to express indefinite amounts of money.

- The printing system may cost *several thousand dollars*.

Use numerals and words for rounded amounts of money over one million dollars.

- The contract is worth *$6.8 million*.

Use numerals for more complex or exact amounts.

- The corporation paid *$2,452,500* in taxes last year.

For amounts under a dollar, ordinarily use numerals and the word *cents* ("The pens cost *75 cents* each"), unless other numerals that require dollar signs appear in the same sentence.

- The business-card holders cost *$10.49* each, the pens cost *$.75* each, and the pencil-cup holders cost *$6.49* each.

ESL TIPS for Punctuating Numbers

Some rules for punctuating numbers in English are summarized as follows:

Use a comma to separate numbers with four or more digits into groups of three, starting from the right (*5,289,112,001 atoms*).

Do not use a comma in years, house numbers, ZIP Codes, and page numbers.

- June *2012*
- *92401* East Alameda Drive
- The ZIP Code is *91601-1243*.
- Page *1204*

Use a period to represent the decimal point (*4.2 percent*, *$3,742,097.43*). See also global communication and global graphics.

Time

Divide hours and minutes with colons when *a.m.* or *p.m.* follows (*7:30 a.m.*, *11:30 p.m.*). Do not use colons with the 24-hour system (*0730*, *2330*). Spelled-out time is not followed by *a.m.* or *p.m.* (*seven o'clock in the evening*).

Dates

In the United States dates are usually written in a month-day-year sequence (*August 11, 2012*). Never use the strictly numerical form for dates (*8/11/12*) because the date is not immediately clear, especially in international correspondence.

Addresses

Spell out numbered streets from one through ten unless space is at a premium (*East Tenth Street*). Write building numbers as numerals. The only exception is the building number *one* (*One East Monument Street*). Write highway numbers as numerals (*U.S. 40*, *Ohio 271*, *I-94*).

Documents

Page numbers are written as numerals in manuscripts (*page 37*). Chapter and volume numbers may appear as numerals or words (*Chapter 2* or *Chapter Two*, *Volume 1* or *Volume One*), but be consistent. Express figure and table numbers as numerals (*Figure 4*, *Table 3*).

Do not follow a word representing a number with a numeral in parentheses that represents the same number. Doing so is redundant.

- Send five ~~(5)~~ copies of the report.

O

objects

Objects are **nouns** or noun equivalents: **pronouns**, **verbals**, and noun **phrases** or **clauses**. The three kinds of objects are direct objects, indirect objects, and objects of **prepositions**. See also **complements**.

A *direct object* answers the question *what?* or *whom?* about a **verb** and its **subject**.

- We sent a *full report*.
  [We sent *what*?]
- Michelle e-mailed the *client*.
  [Michelle e-mailed *whom*?]

An *indirect object* is a noun or noun equivalent that occurs with a direct object after certain kinds of transitive verbs, such as *give*, *wish*, *cause*, and *tell*. The indirect object answers the question *to whom or what?* or *for whom or what?* The indirect object always precedes the direct object.

- We sent the *general manager* a full report.
  [*Report* is the direct object; the indirect object, *general manager*, answers the question, "We sent a full report *to whom*?"]

The *object of a preposition* is a noun or pronoun that is introduced by a preposition, forming a prepositional phrase.

- At the *meeting*, the district managers approved the contract.
  [*Meeting* is the object, and *at the meeting* is the prepositional phrase.]

OK / okay

The expression *okay* (also spelled *OK*) is common in informal writing, but it should be avoided in most technical writing.

- Mr. Sturgess ~~gave his okay to~~ approved the project.

on / onto / upon

On is normally used as a **preposition** meaning "attached to" or "located at." ("Install the shelf *on* the north wall.") *On* also stresses a position of rest. ("The victim lay *on* the stretcher.") *Onto* implies movement to a position on or movement up and on. ("The commuters surged *onto* the platform.") *Upon* emphasizes movement or a condition. ("The report is due *upon* completion of the project.")

one

When used as an indefinite **pronoun**, *one* may help you avoid repeating a **noun**. ("We need a new plan, not an old *one*.") *One* is often redundant in phrases in which it restates the noun, and it may take the proper emphasis away from the **adjective**.

- The training program was not ~~a unique one.~~ *unique.*

One can also be used in place of a noun or personal pronoun in a statement. ("*One* cannot ignore *one's* physical condition.") Using *one* in that way is formal and impersonal; in any but the most formal writing, you should address your reader directly and personally as *you*. ("*You* cannot ignore *your* physical condition.") See also **point of view**.

O

one of those . . . who

A dependent **clause** beginning with *who* or *that* and preceded by *one of those* takes a plural **verb**.

- She is *one of those* managers *who are* concerned about their writing.
- This is *one of those* policies *that make* no sense when you examine them closely.

In those two examples, *who* and *that* refer to plural antecedents (*managers* and *policies*) and thus take plural verbs (*are* and *make*). See also **agreement**.

If the phrase *one of those* is preceded by *the only*, however, the verb should be singular.

- She is *the only one of those* managers *who is* concerned about her writing.
  [The verb is singular because its subject, *who*, refers to a singular antecedent, *one*. If the sentence were reversed, it would read, "Of those managers, she is *the only one who is* concerned about her writing."]
- This is *the only one of those* policies *that makes* no sense when you examine it closely.
  [If the sentence were reversed, it would read, "Of those policies, this is *the only one that makes* no sense when you examine it closely."]

only

The word *only* should be placed immediately before the word or phrase it modifies. See also **modifiers**.

- We ~~only~~ lack *only* financial backing.

Be careful with the placement of *only* because it can change the meaning of a sentence.

- *Only* he said that he was tired.
  [He alone said that he was tired.]
- He *only* said that he was tired.
  [He actually was not tired, although he said he was.]
- He said *only* that he was tired.
  [He said nothing except that he was tired.]
- He said that he was *only* tired.
  [He said that he was nothing except tired.]

order-of-importance method of development

The order-of-importance **method of development** is a particularly effective and common organizing strategy. This method can use one of two ordering strategies—decreasing order (Figure O–1), which is often best for written documents, and increasing order (Figure O–2), which is especially effective for oral **presentations**.

Memorandum

To: Tawana Shaw, Director, Human Resources Department

From: Frank W. Nemitz, Chief, Product Marketing *FWN*

Date: November 20, 2012

Subject: Selection of Manager of the Technical Writing Department

I have assessed the candidates for Manager of the Technical Writing Department as you requested, and the following are my evaluations.

Top-Ranked Candidate
The most-qualified candidate is Michelle Bryant, acting manager of the department. In her 12 years in the department, Ms. Bryant has gained wide experience in all facets of its operations. She has maintained a consistently high production record and has demonstrated the skills and knowledge required for the supervisory duties she is now handling. She has continually been rated "outstanding" in all categories in her job-performance appraisals. However, her supervisory experience is limited to her present three-month tenure as acting manager of the department, and she lacks the college degree required by the job description.

Second-Ranked Candidate
Michael Bastick, Graphics Coordinator, my second choice, also has strong potential for the position. An able administrator, he has been with the company for seven years. Further, he is enrolled in a management-training course at Metro State University's downtown campus. I have ranked him second because he lacks supervisory experience and because his most recent work as a technical writer has been limited.

Third-Ranked Candidate
Jane Fine, my third-ranked candidate, has shown herself to be an exceptionally skilled writer in her three years with the Public Relations Department. Despite her obvious potential, she does not yet have the breadth of experience in technical writing that is required to manage the Technical Writing Department. Jane Fine also lacks on-the-job supervisory experience.

FIGURE O–1. Decreasing Order-of-Importance Method of Development

To: Sun-Hee Kim <kim@appliedsciences.com>
From: Harry Mathews <mathews@appliedsciences.com>
Sent: Friday, May 25, 2012 9:29 AM
Subject: Recruiting Qualified Electronics Technicians

As our company continues to expand, and with the planned opening of the Lakeland Facility late next year, we need to increase and refocus our recruiting program to keep our company staffed with qualified electronics technicians. Below is my analysis of possible recruiting options.

Technical School Recruitment
Over the past three years, we have relied on our in-house internship program and on local and regional technical school graduates to fill these positions. Although our in-house internship program provides a qualified pool of employees, technical school enrollments in the area have in the past provided candidates who are already trained. Each year, however, fewer technical school graduates are being produced, and even the most vigorous Career Day recruiting has yielded disappointing results.

Military Veteran Recruitment
In the past, we relied heavily on the recruitment of skilled veterans from all branches of the military. This source of qualified applicants all but disappeared when the military offered attractive reenlistment bonuses for skilled technicians in uniform. As a result, we need to become aggressive in our attempts to reach this group through advertising. I would like to meet with you soon to discuss the details of a more dynamic recruiting program for skilled technicians leaving the military.

I am certain that with the right recruitment campaign, we can find the skilled employees essential to our expanding role in electronics products and consulting.

FIGURE O–2. Increasing Order-of-Importance Method of Development

Decreasing Order

Decreasing order begins with the most important fact or point, then moves to the next most important, and so on, ending with the least important. This order is especially appropriate for a **memo** or other **correspondence** addressed to a busy decision-maker (see Figure O–1), who may be able to reach a decision after considering only the most important points. In a **report** addressed to various **readers**, some of whom may be interested in only the major points and others who may need all the information, decreasing order may be ideal for your **purpose**.

The advantages of decreasing order are that (1) it gets the reader's attention immediately by presenting the most important point first, (2) it makes a strong initial impression, and (3) it ensures that even the most hurried reader will not miss the most important point.

Increasing Order

Increasing order begins from the least important point or fact, then progresses to the next more important, and builds finally to the most-important or strongest point.

Increasing order of importance is effective for writing in which (1) you want to save your strongest points until the end or (2) you need to build the ideas point by point to an important **conclusion** (see Figure O–2). Many oral presentations benefit especially from increasing order because it leaves the **audience** with the strongest points freshest in their minds. The disadvantage of increasing order, especially for written documents, is that it begins weakly, and the reader or listener may become impatient or distracted before reaching your main point. In the example given in Figure O–2, the writer begins with the least productive source of applicants and builds up to the most productive source.

organization

Organization is essential to the success of any writing project, from a **formal report** to a Web page or an effective **presentation**. Good organization is achieved by **outlining** and by using a logical and an appropriate **method of development** that suits your subject, your **audience**, and your **purpose**.

During the organization stage of the writing process, you must consider a **layout and design** that will be helpful to your reader and a **format** appropriate to your subject and purpose. If you intend to include **visuals** with your writing, consider them as you create your outline, especially if they need to be prepared by someone else while you are writing and revising the draft. See also "Five Steps to Successful Writing" on page xv.

organizational charts

An organizational chart shows how the various divisions or units of an organization are related to one another. This type of **visual** is useful when you want to give **readers** an overview of an organization or to display the lines of authority within it, as in Figure O–3.

The title of each organizational component (office, section, division) is placed in a separate box. The boxes are then linked to a central authority. If readers need the information, include the name of the person and position title in each box. As with all visuals, place the organizational chart as close as possible to but not preceding the text that refers to it.

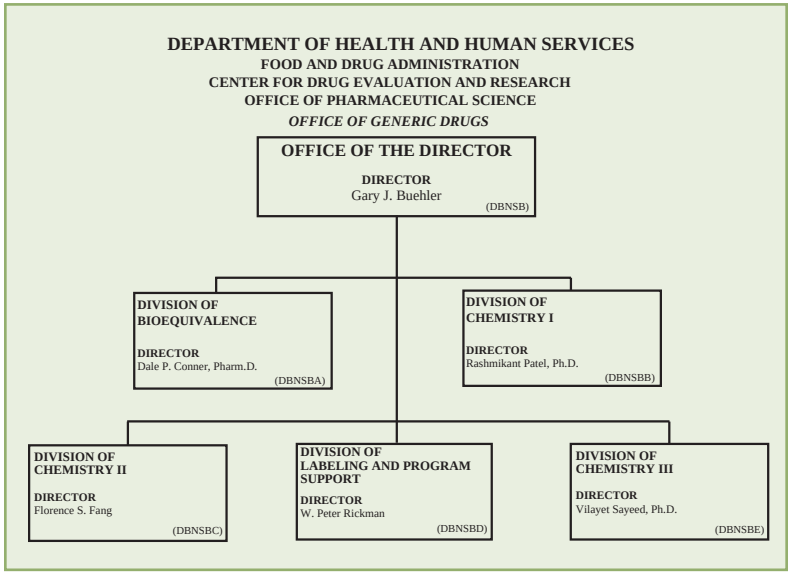


FIGURE O–3. Organizational Chart

outlining

An outline is the skeleton of the document you are going to write; at the least, it should list the main topics and subtopics of your subject in a logical **method of development**.

Advantages of Outlining

An outline provides structure to your writing by ensuring that it has a beginning (**introduction**), a middle (main body), and an end (**conclusion**). Using an outline offers many other benefits.

- Larger and more complex subjects are easier to handle because an outline breaks them into manageable parts.
- Like a road map, an outline indicates a starting point and keeps you moving logically so that you do not lose your way before you arrive at your conclusion.
- Parts of an outline are easily moved around so that you can select the most effective arrangement of your ideas.
- Creating a good outline frees you from concerns of **organization** while you are **writing a draft**.
- An outline enables you to provide **coherence** and **transition** so that one part flows smoothly into the next without omitting important details.
- **Logic errors** are much easier to detect and correct in an outline than in a draft.
- An outline helps with **collaborative writing** because it enables a team to refine a project's **scope**, divide responsibilities, and maintain focus.

Types of Outlines

Two types of outlines are most common: short topic outlines and lengthy sentence outlines. A *topic outline* consists of short phrases arranged to reflect your primary method of development. A topic outline is especially useful for short documents such as **e-mails**, **letters**, or **memos**. See also **correspondence**.

For a large writing project, create a topic outline first, and then use it as a basis for creating a sentence outline. A *sentence outline* summarizes each idea in a complete sentence that may become the topic sentence for a paragraph in the rough draft. If most of your notes can be shaped into topic sentences for paragraphs in your rough draft, you can be relatively sure that your document will be well organized. See also **note-taking** and **research**.

Creating an Outline

When you are outlining large and complex subjects with many pieces of information, the first step is to group related notes into categories. Sort the notes by major and minor division headings. Use an appropriate

method of development to arrange items and label them with Roman numerals. For example, the major divisions for this discussion of outlining could be as follows:

I. Advantages of outlining
II. Types of outlines
III. Creating an outline

The second step is to establish your minor divisions within each major division. Arrange your minor points using a method of development under their major division and label them with capital letters.

II. Types of outlines
  A. Topic outlines
  B. Sentence outlines
  ] Division and Classification
III. Creating an outline
  A. Establish major and minor divisions.
  B. Sort notes by major and minor divisions.
  C. Complete the sentence outline.
  ] Sequential

You will sometimes need more than two levels of headings. If your subject is complicated, you may need three or four levels of headings to better organize all your ideas in proper relationship to one another. In that event, use the following numbering scheme:

I. First-level heading
  A. Second-level heading
    1. Third-level heading
      a. Fourth-level heading

The third step is to mark each of your notes with the appropriate Roman numeral and capital letter. Arrange the notes logically within each minor heading, and mark each with the appropriate, sequential Arabic number. As you do, make sure your organization is logical and your headings have **parallel structure**. For example, all the second-level headings under "III. Creating an outline" are complete sentences in the active **voice**.

Treat **visuals** as an integral part of your outline, and plan approximately where each should appear. Either include a rough sketch of the visual or write "illustration of . . ." at each place. As with other information in an outline, freely move, delete, or add visuals as needed.

The outline samples shown earlier use a combination of numbers and letters to differentiate the various levels of information. You could also use a decimal numbering system, such as the following, for your outline.

1. FIRST-LEVEL HEADING
   1.1 Second-level heading
   1.2 Second-level heading
      1.2.1 Third-level heading
      1.2.2 Third-level heading
         1.2.2.1 Fourth-level heading
         1.2.2.2 Fourth-level heading
   1.3 Second-level heading
2. FIRST-LEVEL HEADING

This system should not go beyond the fourth level because the numbers get too cumbersome beyond that point. In many documents, such as **manuals**, the decimal numbering system is carried over from the outline to the final version of the document for ease of cross-referencing sections.

Create your draft by converting your notes into complete sentences and **paragraphs**. If you have a sentence outline, the most difficult part of the writing job is over. However, whether you have a topic or a sentence outline, remember that an outline is flexible; it may need to change as you write the draft, but it should always be your point of departure and return.

DIGITAL TIP

Creating an Outline

Using the outline feature of your word-processing software allows you to create and quickly modify a structured outline in your document. You can choose an alphanumeric, Roman numeral, decimal, or bulleted style, and you can rearrange and reformat your outline as you write and revise. For step-by-step instructions on using outlines, go to ***bedfordstmartins.com/alred*** and select *Digital Tips*, "Creating an Outline."

outside [of]

In the phrase *outside of*, the word *of* is redundant.

- Place the rack outside ~~of~~ the incubator.

Do not use *outside of* to mean "aside from" or "except for."

- Except for
  ~~Outside of~~ his frequent absences, Jim has a good work record.

over [with]

In the expression *over with*, the word *with* is redundant; such words as *completed* or *finished* often better express the thought.

- You may open the test chamber when the experiment is over ~~with.~~
- You may open the test chamber when the experiment is ~~over with.~~ completed.

P

pace

Pace is the speed at which you present ideas to the reader. Your goal should be to achieve a pace that fits your **audience**, **purpose**, and **context**. The more knowledgeable the reader is about the subject, the faster your pace can be. Be careful, though, not to lose control of the pace. In the first version of the following passage, facts are piled on top of each other at a rapid pace. In the second version, the same facts are presented in two more easily assimilated sentences. In addition, the second version achieves a different and more desirable **emphasis**.

RAPID

The hospital's generator produces 110 volts at 60 hertz and is powered by a 90-horsepower engine. It is designed to operate under normal conditions of temperature and humidity, for use under emergency conditions, and may be phased with other units of the same type to produce additional power when needed.

CONTROLLED

The hospital's generator, which is powered by a 90-horsepower engine, produces 110 volts at 60 hertz under normal conditions of temperature and humidity. Designed especially for use under emergency conditions, this generator may be phased with other units of the same type to produce additional power when needed.

paragraphs

A paragraph performs three functions: (1) It develops the unit of thought stated in the topic sentence; (2) it provides a logical break in the material; and (3) it creates a visual break on the page, which signals a new topic.

Topic Sentence

A topic sentence states the paragraph's main idea; the rest of the paragraph supports and develops that statement with related details. The

topic sentence is often the first sentence because it tells the reader what the paragraph is about.

- *The cost of training new employees is high*. In addition to the cost of classroom facilities and instructors, an organization must pay employees their regular salary while they sit in the classroom. For the companies to break even on this investment in their professional employees, those employees must stay in the job for which they have been trained for at least one year.

The topic sentence is usually most effective early in the paragraph, but a paragraph can lead to the topic sentence, which is sometimes done to achieve **emphasis**.

- Energy does far more than simply make our daily lives more comfortable and convenient. Suppose someone wanted to stop—and reverse—the economic progress of this nation. What would be the surest and quickest way to do it? Simply block the nation's ability to produce energy! The nation would face a devastating economic crisis. *Our economy, in short, is energy-based*.

On rare occasions, the topic sentence may logically fall in the middle of a paragraph.

- . . . [It] is time to insist that science does not progress by carefully designed steps called "experiments," each of which has a well-defined beginning and end. *Science is a continuous and often a disorderly and accidental process*. We shall not do the young psychologist any favor if we agree to reconstruct our practices to fit the pattern demanded by current scientific methodology.
  —B. F. Skinner, "A Case History in Scientific Method"

Paragraph Length

A paragraph should be just long enough to deal adequately with the subject of its topic sentence. A new paragraph should begin whenever the subject changes significantly. A series of short, undeveloped paragraphs can indicate poor **organization** and sacrifice unity by breaking a single idea into several pieces. A series of long paragraphs, however, can fail to provide the reader with manageable subdivisions of thought. Paragraph length should aid the reader's understanding of ideas.

Occasionally, a one-sentence paragraph is acceptable if it is used as a **transition** between longer paragraphs or as a one-sentence **introduction** or **conclusion** in **correspondence**.

Writing Paragraphs

Careful paragraphing reflects the writer's logical organization and helps the reader follow the writer's thoughts. A good working outline makes it easy to group ideas into appropriate paragraphs. (See also **outlining**.) The following partial topic outline plots the course of the subsequent paragraphs:

TOPIC OUTLINE (PARTIAL)

I. Advantages of Chicago as location for new facility
   A. Transport infrastructure
      1. Rail
      2. Air
      3. Truck
      4. Sea (except in winter)
   B. Labor supply
      1. Engineering and scientific personnel
         a. Similar companies in area
         b. Major universities
      2. Technical and manufacturing personnel
         a. Community college programs
         b. Custom programs

RESULTING PARAGRAPHS

Probably the greatest advantage of Chicago as a location for our new facility is its excellent transport facilities. The city is served by three major railroads. Both domestic and international air-cargo service are available at O'Hare International Airport; Midway Airport's convenient location adds flexibility for domestic air-cargo service. Chicago is a major hub of the trucking industry, and most of the nation's large freight carriers have terminals there. Finally, except in the winter months when the Great Lakes are frozen, Chicago is a seaport, accessible through the St. Lawrence Seaway.

Chicago's second advantage is its abundant labor force. An ample supply of engineering and scientific staff is assured not only by the presence of many companies engaged in activities similar to ours but also by the presence of several major universities in the metropolitan area. Similarly, technicians and manufacturing personnel are in abundant supply. The colleges in the Chicago City College system, as well as half a dozen other two-year colleges in the outlying areas, produce graduates with associate's degrees in a wide variety of technical specialties appropriate to our needs. Moreover, three of the outlying colleges have expressed an interest in developing off-campus courses attuned specifically to our requirements.

Paragraph Unity and Coherence

A good paragraph has **unity** and **coherence** as well as adequate development. *Unity* is singleness of purpose, based on a topic sentence that states the core idea of the paragraph. When every sentence in the paragraph develops the core idea, the paragraph has unity. *Coherence* is holding to one point of view, one attitude, one tense; it is the joining of sentences into a logical pattern. A careful choice of transitional words ties ideas together and thus contributes to coherence in a paragraph. Notice how the boldfaced italicized words tie together the ideas in the following paragraph.

TOPIC SENTENCE

Over the past several months, I have heard complaints about the Merit Award Program. ***Specifically***, many employees feel that this program should be linked to annual ***salary increases***. They believe that ***salary increases*** would provide a much better incentive than the current $500 to $700 cash awards for exceptional service. ***In addition***, these ***employees believe*** that their supervisors consider the cash awards a satisfactory alternative to salary increases. Although I don't think this practice is widespread, the fact that the ***employees believe*** that it is justifies a reevaluation of the Merit Award Program.

Simple enumeration (*first*, *second*, *then*, *next*, and so on) also provides effective transition within paragraphs. Notice how the boldfaced italicized words and phrases give coherence to the following paragraph.

- Most adjustable office chairs have nylon tubes that hold metal spindle rods. To keep the chair operational, lubricate the spindle rods occasionally. ***First***, loosen the set screw in the adjustable bell. ***Then*** lift the chair from the base. ***Next***, apply the lubricant to the spindle rod and the nylon washer. ***When you have finished***, replace the chair and tighten the set screw.

parallel structure

Parallel structure requires that sentence elements that are alike in function be alike in grammatical form as well. This structure achieves an economy of words, clarifies meaning, expresses the equality of the ideas, and achieves **emphasis**. Parallel structure assists **readers** because it allows them to anticipate the meaning of a sentence element on the basis of its construction.

Parallel structure can be achieved with words, **phrases**, or **clauses**.

- If you want to benefit from the jobs training program, you must be *punctual*, *courteous*, and *conscientious*. [parallel words]
- If you want to benefit from the jobs training program, you must recognize the importance *of punctuality*, *of courtesy*, and *of conscientiousness*. [parallel phrases]
- If you want to benefit from the jobs training program, *you must arrive punctually*, *you must behave courteously*, and *you must study conscientiously*. [parallel clauses]

Correlative **conjunctions** (*either . . . or*, *neither . . . nor*, *not only . . . but also*) should always join elements that use parallel structure. Both parts of the pairs should be followed immediately by the same grammatical form: two similar words, two similar phrases, or two similar clauses.

- Viruses carry either *DNA* or *RNA*, never both. [parallel words]
- Clearly, neither *serological tests* nor *virus isolation studies* alone would have been adequate. [parallel phrases]
- Either *we must increase our production efficiency* or *we must decrease our production goals*. [parallel clauses]

To make a parallel construction clear and effective, it is often best to repeat an **article**, a **pronoun**, a helping **verb**, a **preposition**, a subordinating conjunction, or the mark of an infinitive (*to*).

- The association has *a* mission statement and *a* code of ethics. [article]
- The software is popular *because* it is compatible across platforms and *because* it is easily customized. [subordinating conjunction]

Parallel structure is especially important in creating **lists**, outlines, **tables of contents**, and **headings** because it lets readers know the relative value of each item in a table of contents and each heading in the body of a document. See also **outlining**.

Faulty Parallelism

Faulty parallelism results when joined elements are intended to serve equal grammatical functions but do not have equal grammatical form.

Faulty parallelism sometimes occurs because a writer tries to compare items that are not comparable.

NOT PARALLEL The company offers special college training to help hourly employees move into professional careers

like engineering management, software development, service technicians, and sales trainees. [Notice faulty comparison of occupations—*engineering management* and *software development*—to people—*service technicians* and *sales trainees*.]

To avoid faulty parallelism, make certain that each element in a series is similar in form and structure to all others in the same series.

PARALLEL The company offers special college training to help hourly employees move into professional careers like *engineering management*, *software development*, *technical services*, and *sales*.

paraphrasing

Paraphrasing is restating or rewriting in your own words the essential ideas of another writer. The following example is an original passage explaining the concept of *object blur*. The paraphrased version restates the essential information of the passage in a form appropriate for a **report**.

ORIGINAL One of the major visual cues used by pilots in maintaining precision ground reference during low-level flight is that of object blur. We are acquainted with the object-blur phenomenon experienced when driving an automobile. Objects in the foreground appear to be rushing toward us, while objects in the background appear to recede slightly.

—Wesley E. Woodson and Donald W. Conover, *Human Engineering Guide for Equipment Designers*

PARAPHRASED Object blur refers to the phenomenon by which observers in a moving vehicle report that foreground objects appear to rush at them, while background objects appear to recede slightly (Woodson & Conover, 1964).

❖ ETHICS NOTE Because paraphrasing does not quote a source word for word, **quotation marks** are not used. However, paraphrased material should be credited because the *ideas* are taken from someone else. See also **ethics in writing**, **note-taking**, **plagiarism**, and **quotations**. ❖

parentheses

Parentheses are used to enclose explanatory or digressive words, phrases, or sentences. Material in parentheses often clarifies or defines the preceding text without altering its meaning.

- She severely bruised her tibia (or shinbone) in the accident.

Parenthetical information may not be essential to a sentence (in fact, parentheses deemphasize the enclosed material), but it may be helpful to some readers.

Parenthetical material does not affect the punctuation of a sentence, and any punctuation (such as a **comma** or **period**) should appear following the closing parenthesis.

- She could not fully extend her knee because of a torn meniscus (or cartilage), and she suffered pain from a severely bruised tibia (or shinbone).

When a complete sentence within parentheses stands independently, the ending punctuation is placed inside the final parenthesis.

- The project director listed the problems her staff faced. (This was the third time she had complained to the board.)

For some constructions, however, you should consider using **subordination** rather than parentheses.

- The early tests showed little damage ~~(the attending physician was pleased),~~ *, which pleased the attending physician,* but later scans revealed abdominal trauma.

Parentheses also are used to enclose numerals or letters that indicate sequence.

- The following sections deal with (1) preparation, (2) research, (3) organization, (4) writing, and (5) revision.

Do not follow spelled-out **numbers** with numerals in parentheses representing the same numbers.

- Send five ~~(5)~~ copies of the report.

Use **brackets** to set off a parenthetical item that is already within parentheses.

- We should be sure to give Emanuel Foose (and his brother Emilio [1912–1982]) credit for his part in founding the institute.

See also **documenting sources** and **quotations**.

parts of speech

The term *parts of speech* describes the class of words to which a particular word belongs, according to its function in a sentence.

PART OF SPEECH	FUNCTION
noun, pronoun	naming / referring
verb	acting / asserting
adjective, adverb	describing / modifying
conjunction, preposition	joining / linking
interjection	exclaiming

Many words can function as more than one part of speech. See also **functional shift**.

party

In legal language, *party* refers to an individual, a group, or an organization. ("The injured *party* sued my client.") The term *party* is inappropriate in all but legal writing; when you are referring to a person, use the word *person*.

► The ~~party~~ *person* whose file you requested is here now.

Party is, of course, appropriate when it refers to a group. ("Jim arranged a tour of the facility for the members of our *party*.")

per

When *per* is used to mean "for each," "by means of," "through," or "on account of," it is appropriate (*per annum*, *per capita*, *per diem*, *per head*). When used to mean "according to" (*per your request*, *per your order*), the expression is **jargon** and should be avoided.

► As ~~per our discussion~~, *we discussed,* I will send revised instructions.

percent / percentage

Percent is normally used instead of the symbol % ("only 15 *percent*"), except in **tables**, where space is at a premium. *Percentage*, which is never used with **numbers**, indicates a general size ("only a small *percentage*").

periods

A period is a mark of **punctuation** that usually indicates the end of a declarative or an imperative sentence. Periods also link when used as leaders (as in rows of periods in **tables of contents**) and indicate omissions when used as **ellipses**. Periods are also used to end questions that are actually polite requests, or instructions to which an affirmative response is assumed. ("Will you call me as soon as he arrives.") See also **sentence construction**.

Periods in Quotations

Use a **comma**, not a period, after a declarative sentence that is quoted in the context of another sentence.

- "There is every chance of success," she stated.

A period is placed inside **quotation marks**. See also **quotations**.

- He stated clearly, "My vote is yes."

Periods with Parentheses

Place a period outside the final parenthesis when a parenthetical element ends a sentence.

- The institute was founded by Harry Denman (1902–1972).

Place a period inside the final parenthesis when a complete sentence stands independently within **parentheses**.

- The project director listed the problems her staff faced. (This was the third time she had complained to the board.)

Other Uses of Periods

Use periods following the numerals in a numbered **list** and following complete sentences in a list.

- 1. Enter your name and PIN.
  2. Enter your address with ZIP Code.
  3. Enter your home telephone number.

Use periods after initials in names (*Wilma T. Grant*, *J. P. Morgan*). Use periods as decimal points with **numbers** (*27.3 degrees Celsius*, *$540.26*, *6.9 percent*). Use periods to indicate certain **abbreviations** (*Ms.*, *Dr.*, *Inc.*). When a sentence ends with an abbreviation that ends with a period, do not add another period. ("Please meet me at 3:30 p.m.")

Period Faults

The incorrect use of a period is sometimes referred to as a *period fault*. When a period is inserted prematurely, the result is a **sentence fragment**.

FRAGMENT	After a long day at the office during which we finished the quarterly report. We left hurriedly for home.
SENTENCE	After a long day at the office, during which we finished the quarterly report, we left hurriedly for home.

When two independent clauses are joined without any punctuation, the result is a *fused*, or *run-on*, *sentence*. Adding a period between the clauses is one way to correct a run-on sentence.

RUN-ON	Bill was late for ten days in a row Ms. Sturgess had to dismiss him.
CORRECT	Bill was late for ten days in a row. Ms. Sturgess had to dismiss him.

Other options are to add a comma and a coordinating **conjunction** (*and*, *but*, *for*, *or*, *nor*, *so*, *yet*) between the clauses, to add a **semicolon**, or to add a semicolon with a conjunctive **adverb**, such as *therefore* or *however*.

person

Person refers to the form of a personal **pronoun** that indicates whether the pronoun represents the speaker, the person spoken to, or the person or thing spoken about. A pronoun representing the speaker is in the *first* person. ("*I* could not find the answer in the manual.") A pronoun that represents the person or people spoken to is in the *second* person.

("*You* will be a good manager.") A pronoun that represents the person or people spoken about is in the *third* person. ("*They* received the news quietly.") The following list shows first-, second-, and third-person pronouns. See also **case**, **number**, and **one**.

PERSON	SINGULAR	PLURAL
First	I, me, my, mine	we, us, our, ours
Second	you, your, yours	you, your, yours
Third	he, him, his, she, her, hers, it, its	they, them, their, theirs

persuasion

Persuasive writing attempts to convince an **audience** to adopt the writer's point of view or take a particular action. Workplace writing often uses persuasion to reinforce ideas that readers already have, to convince readers to change their current ideas, or to lobby for a particular suggestion or policy (as in Figure P–1). You may find yourself advocating for safer working conditions, justifying the expense of a new program, or writing a **proposal** for a large purchase. See also **context** and **purpose**.

In persuasive writing, the way you present your ideas is as important as the ideas themselves. You must support your appeal with logic and a sound presentation of facts, statistics, and examples, as in Figure P–1. See also **logic errors**.

A writer also gains credibility, and thus persuasiveness, through the readers' impressions of the document's appearance. For this reason, consider carefully a document's **layout and design**. See also **résumés**.

❖ ETHICS NOTE Avoid ambiguity. Do not wander from your main point and, above all, never make false claims. You should also acknowledge any real or potentially conflicting opinions; doing so allows you to anticipate and overcome objections and builds your credibility. See also **ethics in writing**. ❖

The **memo** shown in Figure P–1 was written to persuade the engineering staff to accept and participate in a change to a new computer system. Notice that not everything in this memo is presented in a positive light. Change brings disruption, and the writer acknowledges that fact.

A persuasive technique that places the focus on your reader's interest and perspective is discussed in the entry **"you" viewpoint**. See also **correspondence**.

Interoffice Memo

TO: Engineering Staff

FROM: Harold Kawenski, MIS Administrator HK

DATE: April 23, 2012

SUBJECT: Plans for the Changeover to the NRT/R4 System

As you all know, the merger with Datacom has resulted in dramatic growth in our workload—a 30-percent increase in our customer support services during the last several months. To cope with this expansion, we will soon install the NRT/R4 server and QCS Enterprise software with Web-based applications.

Let me briefly describe the benefits of this system and the ways we plan to help you cope with the changeover.

The QCS system will help us access up-to-date marketing and product information when we need it. This system will speed processing dramatically and give us access to all relevant company-wide databases. Because we anticipate that our workload will increase another 30 percent in the next several months, we need to get the QCS system online and working smoothly as soon as possible.

The changeover to this system, understandably, will cause some disruption at first. We will need to transfer many of our legacy programs and software applications to the new system. In addition, all of us will need to learn to navigate in the R4 and QCS environments. Once we have made these adjustments, however, I believe we will welcome the changes.

To help everyone adapt to the changeover, we will offer training sessions that will begin next week. I have attached a sign-up form with specific class times. We will also provide a technical support hotline at extension 4040, which will be available during business hours; e-mail support at qcs-support@conco.com; and online help documentation.

I would like to urge you to help us make a smooth transition to the QCS system. Please e-mail me with your suggestions or questions about the impact of the changeover on your department. I look forward to working with you to make this system a success.

Enclosure: Training Session Schedule

FIGURE P–1. Persuasive Memo

phenomenon / phenomena

A *phenomenon* is an observable thing, fact, or occurrence ("a natural *phenomenon*"). Its plural form is *phenomena*.

photographs

Photographs are often the best way to show the appearance of an object, record an event, or demonstrate the development of a phenomenon over a period of time. Photographs, however, cannot depict the internal workings of a mechanism or below-the-surface details of objects or structures. Such details are better represented in **drawings**. Photographs are also effective in catching the readers' attention and adding personal relevance to such documents as **brochures** and **newsletters**. See also **readers**.

An effective photograph shows important details and indicates the relative size of the subject by including a familiar object—such as a ruler or a person—near the subject being photographed. Figure P–2 shows a

FIGURE P–2. Photo (of Control Device). (Photo courtesy of Ken Cook Company.)

photograph of a control device held by a human hand to illustrate its relative size.

For **reports**, treat photographs as you do other **visuals**, giving them figure numbers, call-outs (labels) to identify key features, and captions, if needed. Position the figure number and caption so that readers can view them and the photograph from the same orientation.

❖ ETHICS NOTE Be careful to avoid **plagiarism** by appropriately **documenting sources** for photographs and to obtain permission from the **copyright** holder if you plan to publish photographs that you do not take yourself. If you do take your own photographs, be sure to get the full name, contact information, and permission of any persons featured before publishing. ❖

phrases

DIRECTORY

Prepositional Phrases 399
Participial Phrases 399
Dangling Participial Phrases 400
Misplaced Participial Phrases 400
Infinitive Phrases 400
Gerund Phrases 401
Verb Phrases 401
Noun Phrases 401

A phrase is a meaningful group of words that cannot make a complete statement because it does not contain both a subject and a predicate, as **clauses** do. Phrases, which are based on **nouns**, nonfinite **verb** forms, or verb combinations, provide context within the clause or sentence in which they appear. See also **sentence construction**.

- She reassured her staff *by her calm confidence*. [phrase]

A phrase may function as an **adjective**, an **adverb**, a noun, or a verb.

- The subjects *on the agenda* were all discussed. [adjective]
- We discussed the project *with great enthusiasm*. [adverb]
- *Working hard* is her way of life. [noun]
- The chief engineer *should have been notified*. [verb]

Even though phrases function as adjectives, adverbs, nouns, or verbs, they are normally named for the kind of word around which they are constructed—**preposition**, participle, infinitive, gerund, verb, or noun. A phrase that begins with a preposition is a *prepositional phrase*, a phrase that begins with a participle is a *participial phrase*, and so on.

For typical verb phrases and prepositional phrases that can cause difficulty for speakers of **English as a second language**, see **idioms**.

Prepositional Phrases

A preposition is a word that shows relationship and combines with a noun or **pronoun** (its **object**) to form a modifying phrase. A prepositional phrase, then, consists of a preposition plus its object and the object's modifiers.

- *After the meeting*, the district managers adjourned *to the cafeteria*.

Prepositional phrases, because they normally modify nouns or verbs, usually function as adjectives or adverbs. A prepositional phrase may function as an adverb of motion ("Turn the dial four degrees *to the left*") or an adverb of manner ("Answer customers' questions *in a courteous fashion*"). A prepositional phrase may function as an adverb of place and may appear in different places in the sentence.

- *In home and office computer systems*, security is essential.
- Security is essential *in home and office computer systems*.

Prepositional phrases may function as adjectives; when they do, they follow the nouns they modify.

- Food waste *with a high protein content* can be processed into animal food.

Be careful when you use prepositional phrases because separating a prepositional phrase from the noun it modifies can cause **ambiguity**.

AMBIGUOUS	*The woman* standing by the security guard *in the gray suit* is our division manager.
CLEAR	*The woman in the gray suit* who is standing by the security guard is our division manager.

Watch as well for the overuse of prepositional phrases where **modifiers** would be more economical.

OVERUSED	The man *with gray hair in the blue suit with pinstripes* is the former president *of the company*.
ECONOMICAL	The *gray-haired* man in the *blue pin-striped* suit is the former *company* president.

Participial Phrases

A participle is any form of a verb that is used as an adjective. A participial phrase consists of a participle plus its object and its modifiers.

- The division *having the largest number of patents* will work with NASA.

The relationship between a participial phrase and the rest of the sentence must be clear to the reader. For that reason, every sentence containing a participial phrase must have a noun or pronoun that the participial phrase modifies; if it does not, the result is a dangling participial phrase.

Dangling Participial Phrases. A dangling participial phrase occurs when the noun or pronoun that the participial phrase is meant to modify is not stated but only implied in the sentence. See also **dangling modifiers**.

DANGLING	*Being unhappy with the job*, his efficiency suffered. [His efficiency was not unhappy with the job; what the participial phrase really modifies—*he*—is not stated but merely implied.]
CORRECT	*Being unhappy with the job*, he grew less efficient. [In this version, what that participial phrase modifies—*he*—is explicitly stated.]

Misplaced Participial Phrases. A participial phrase is misplaced when it is too far from the noun or pronoun it is meant to modify and so appears to modify something else. Such an error can make the writer look ridiculous.

MISPLACED	We saw a large warehouse *driving down the highway*.
CORRECT	*Driving down the highway*, we saw a large warehouse.

P

Infinitive Phrases

An infinitive is the basic form of a verb (*go*, *run*, *talk*) without the restrictions imposed by **person** and **number**. An infinitive is generally preceded by the word *to* (which is usually a preposition but in this use is called the *sign*, or *mark*, of the infinitive). An infinitive phrase consists of the word *to* plus an infinitive and any objects or modifiers.

- *To improve as a writer*, you must be willing *to accept criticism*.

Do not confuse a prepositional phrase beginning with *to* with an infinitive phrase. In an infinitive phrase, *to* is followed by a verb; in a prepositional phrase, *to* is followed by a noun or pronoun.

PREPOSITIONAL PHRASE	We went *to the building site*.
INFINITIVE PHRASE	Our firm tries *to provide a comprehensive training program*.

The implied subject of an introductory infinitive phrase should be the same as the subject of the sentence. If it is not, the phrase is a dangling modifier. In the following example, the implied subject of the infinitive is *you* or *one*, not *practice*.

- To learn a new language, ~~practice is needed.~~ *you must practice.*

Gerund Phrases

A gerund is a **verbal** ending in *-ing* that is used as a noun. A gerund phrase consists of a gerund plus any objects or modifiers and always functions as a noun.

SUBJECT	*Preparing a grant proposal* is a difficult task.
DIRECT OBJECT	She liked *chairing the committee*.

Verb Phrases

A verb phrase consists of a main verb and its helping verb.

- He *is* [helping verb] *working* [main verb] hard this summer.

Words can appear between the helping verb and the main verb of a verb phrase. ("He *is* always *working*.") The main verb is always the last verb in a verb phrase.

Questions often begin with a verb phrase. ("*Will* he *verify* the results?") The adverb *not* may be appended to a helping verb in a verb phrase. ("He *did not work* today.")

Noun Phrases

A noun phrase consists of a noun and its modifiers. ("Have *the two new employees* fill out *these forms*.")

plagiarism

Plagiarism is the use of someone else's unique ideas without acknowledgment or the use of someone else's exact words without **quotation marks** and appropriate credit. Plagiarism is considered to be the theft of someone else's creative and intellectual property and is not accepted in business, science, journalism, academia, or any other field. See also **ethics in writing** and **research**.

Citing Sources

Quoting a passage—including cutting and pasting a passage from an Internet source into your work—is permissible only if you enclose the passage in quotation marks and properly cite the source. For detailed guidance on quoting correctly, see **quotations**. If you intend to publish, reproduce, or distribute material that includes quotations from published works, including Web sites, you may need to obtain written permission from the **copyright** holders of those works.

Even Web sites that grant permission to copy, distribute, or modify material under the "copyleft" principle, such as Wikipedia, nonetheless caution that you must give appropriate credit to the source from which material is taken (see *http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wikipedia:Citing_Wikipedia*).

Paraphrasing the words and ideas of another *also requires that you cite your source*, even though you do not enclose paraphrased ideas or materials in quotation marks. (See also **documenting sources**.) Paraphrasing a passage without citing the source is permissible only when the information paraphrased is common knowledge.

Common Knowledge

Common knowledge generally refers to information that is widely known and readily available in handbooks, manuals, atlases, and other references. For example, the "law of supply and demand" is common knowledge and is found in virtually every economics and business textbook.

Common knowledge also refers to information within a specific field that is generally known and understood by most others in that field—even though it is not widely known by those outside the field. For examples, see the Web Link at the end of this entry.

An indication that something is common knowledge is its appearance in multiple sources without citation. However, when in doubt, cite the source.

❖ ETHICS NOTE In the workplace, employees often borrow material freely from in-house manuals, reports, and other company documents. Using or **repurposing** such material is neither plagiarism nor a violation of copyright. For information on the use of public domain and government material, see **copyright**. ❖

WEB LINK	Avoiding Plagiarism
For a tutorial on using sources correctly, see ***bedfordstmartins.com/alred*** and select *Try a tutorial*, "On avoiding plagiarism." For links to other resources, select *Links for Handbook Entries*.	

plain language

Plain language means writing that is logically organized and understandable on the first reading. Many states have created "plain-language" laws, which require that documents be written in clear, understandable language. The federal government also requires that all its regulations be written in plain language. Cross-references to entries that describe plain-language principles in more detail appear throughout this entry.

Strive to communicate with your audience in language that is both uncomplicated and accurate. Assess your **audience** carefully to ensure that your language connects with their level of knowledge. Replace **jargon** and complex legal wording with familiar, concise words or terms when possible. See also **conciseness** and **gobbledygook**.

COMPLICATED	The systems integration specialist must be able to visually perceive the entire directional response module.
PLAIN LANGUAGE	The operator must be able to see the entire control panel.

If you are a health-care provider, for example, use the appropriate plain-language equivalent for medical terminology with patients in conversations and written guidelines: *bleeding* instead of *hemorrhaging*; *heart attack* instead of *myocardial infarction*; *cast* instead of *splint*; *stitches* instead of *sutures*. If a plain-language alternative does not exist, define or explain a technical term on its first use.

Avoid the tendency to create jargon or **acronyms and initialisms** unique to your subject. Unfamiliar acronyms may save a few words but they force readers to take more time and effort to understand your content. Of course, if acronyms, initialisms, and other **abbreviations** are familiar to your readers, use them (*BTU*, *HTML*, *NASDAQ*, *USPS*). And use consistent terminology for the same thing (*car*, *vehicle*, *automobile*—choose one). See also **affectation**.

Use appropriate **sentence construction** that produces coherent sentences and eliminates unnecessary words. See also **garbled sentences**.

BEFORE	The following executive summary is intended primarily to highlight the causes of the accident as outlined elsewhere in this investigative report.
AFTER	This summary highlights the causes of the accident investigated in this report.

Use the active **voice**. It is more direct, often more concise, and easier for readers to understand—all devices that promote plain language.

Importantly, it identifies the doer of the action described ("we" in the following).

PASSIVE The malfunctioning transmission was redesigned.

ACTIVE We redesigned the malfunctioning transmission.

Avoid stating positive information as though it were negative. See **positive writing**.

NEGATIVE If the error does not involve data transmission, the backup function will not be used.

POSITIVE The backup function is used only when the error involves data transmission.

Plain-language principles are especially useful when writing **international correspondence**. For format and visual elements that promote **clarity**, see **layout and design**, **lists**, and **visuals**. See also **English as a second language**.

WRITER'S CHECKLIST Using Plain Language

- ✔ Identify your average reader's level of technical knowledge.
- ✔ Avoid unnecessary jargon and legal language.
- ✔ Avoid confusing terms and constructions.
  - Define necessary abbreviations and acronyms.
  - Use the same words consistently for the same things.
  - Do not give an obscure meaning to a word.
- ✔ Use the active voice for directness and to identify doers of actions.
- ✔ Use the second **person** (*you / your*) or imperative **mood** to write directly to the reader and to make the writing relevant to the reader.
- ✔ Write coherent sentences.
  - Aim for one message in each sentence.
  - Break up complex information into smaller, easier-to-understand units.
  - Use positive writing and simple present **tense** as much as possible.
- ✔ Select word placement carefully.
  - Keep subjects and **objects** close to their **verbs**.
  - Put *only*, *always*, and other conditional words next to the words they modify.

WEB LINK	Plain Language
For links to sites that provide information about plain-language laws and practices, go to ***bedfordstmartins.com/alred*** and select *Links for Handbook Entries*.	

point of view

Point of view is the writer's relation to the information presented, as reflected in the use of grammatical **person**. The writer usually expresses point of view in first-, second-, or third-person personal **pronouns**. Use of first person indicates that the writer is a participant or an observer. Use of second or third person indicates that the writer is giving directions, **instructions**, or advice, or is writing about other people or something impersonal.

FIRST PERSON	*I* scrolled down to find the settings option.
SECOND PERSON	*You* need to scroll down to find the settings option. [*You* is explicitly stated.] Scroll down to find the settings option. [*You* is understood in such an instruction.]
THIRD PERSON	*He* scrolled down to find the settings option.

Consider the following sentence, revised from an impersonal to a more personal point of view. Although the meaning of the sentence does not change, the revision indicates that people are involved in the communication.

▶ I regret ~~It is regrettable~~ that we cannot accept the equipment shipped on Friday ~~is unacceptable~~.

Some people think they should avoid the pronoun *I* in technical writing. Such practice, however, often leads to awkward sentences, with people referring to themselves in the third person as *one* or as *the writer* instead of as *I*.

▶ I ~~One~~ can only conclude that the absorption rate is too fast.

However, do not use the personal point of view when an impersonal point of view would be more appropriate or more effective because you

need to emphasize the subject matter over the writer or the reader. In the following example, it does not help to personalize the situation; in fact, the impersonal version may be more tactful.

PERSONAL I received objections to my proposal from several of your managers.

IMPERSONAL Several managers have raised objections to the proposal.

Whether you adopt a personal or an impersonal point of view depends on the **purpose** and the **audience** of the document. For example, in an informal **e-mail** to an associate, you would most likely adopt a personal point of view. However, in a **report** to a large group, you would probably emphasize the subject by using an impersonal point of view. See also **plain language**.

❖ ETHICS NOTE In company **correspondence**, use of the pronoun *we* may be interpreted as reflecting company policy, whereas *I* clearly reflects personal opinion. Which pronoun to use should be decided according to whether you are speaking for yourself (*I*) or for the company (*we*).

- *I* understand your frustration with the approval process, but *we* must meet the new safety regulations. ❖

ESL TIPS for Stating an Opinion

In some cultures, stating an opinion in writing is considered impolite or unnecessary, but in the United States, readers expect to see a writer's opinion stated clearly and explicitly. The opinion should be followed by specific examples to help the reader understand the writer's point of view.

positive writing

Presenting positive information as though it were negative is confusing to **readers**.

NEGATIVE If the error does *not* involve data transmission, the backup function will *not* be used.

In this sentence, the reader must reverse two negatives to understand the exception that is being stated. (See also **double negatives**.) The following

sentence presents the exception in a positive and straightforward manner. See also **plain language**.

POSITIVE The backup function is used only when the error involves data transmission.

❖ ETHICS NOTE Negative facts or conclusions, however, should be stated negatively; stating a negative fact or conclusion positively is deceptive because it can mislead the reader.

DECEPTIVE In the first quarter of this year, employee exposure to airborne lead averaged within 10 percent of acceptable state health standards.

ACCURATE In the first quarter of this year, employee exposure to airborne lead averaged 10 percent below acceptable state health standards.

See also **ethics in writing**. ❖

Even if what you are saying is negative, do not state it more negatively than necessary.

NEGATIVE We are withholding your shipment because we have not received your payment.

POSITIVE We will forward your shipment as soon as we receive your payment.

See also **correspondence** and **"you" viewpoint**.

possessive case

A **noun** or **pronoun** is in the possessive case when it represents a person, place, or thing that possesses something. Possession is generally expressed with an **apostrophe** and an *s* ("the *report's* title"), with a prepositional **phrase** using *of* ("the title *of the report*"), or with the possessive form of a pronoun ("*our* report").

Practices vary for some possessive forms, but the following guidelines are widely used. Above all, be consistent.

Singular Nouns

Most singular nouns show the possessive case with *'s*.

- the *hospital's* medical staff
  an *employee's* paycheck
  the *witness's* testimony
  the *bus's* schedule

When pronunciation with *'s* is difficult or when a multisyllable noun ends in a *z* sound, you may use only an apostrophe.

- *New Orleans'* convention hotels

Plural Nouns

Plural nouns that end in *-s* or *-es* show the possessive case with only an apostrophe.

- the *managers'* reports
  the *employees'* paychecks
  the *companies'* joint project
  the *witnesses'* testimony

Plural nouns that do not end in *-s* show the possessive with *'s*.

- *children's* clothing, *women's* resources, *men's* room

Apostrophes are not always used in official names ("*Consumers* Union") or for words that may appear to be possessive nouns but function as **adjectives** ("a *computer peripherals* supplier").

Compound Nouns

Compound words form the possessive with *'s* following the final letter.

- the *attorney general's* decision, the *editor-in-chief's* desk, the *pipeline's* diameter

Plurals of some compound expressions are often best expressed with a prepositional phrase ("presentations *of the editors in chief*").

Coordinate Nouns

Coordinate nouns show joint possession with *'s* following the last noun.

- *Fischer and Goulet's* partnership was the foundation of their business.

Coordinate nouns show individual possession with *'s* following each noun.

- The difference between *Barker's* and *Washburne's* test results was not statistically significant.

Possessive Pronouns

The possessive pronouns (*its*, *whose*, *his*, *her*, *our*, *your*, *my*, *their*) are also used to show possession and do not require apostrophes. ("Even good systems have *their* flaws.") Only the possessive form of a pronoun should be used with a gerund (a noun formed from an *-ing* **verb**).

- The safety officer insisted on *our* wearing protective clothing. [*Wearing* is the gerund.]

Possessive pronouns are also used to replace nouns. ("The responsibility was *theirs*.") See also **its / it's**.

Indefinite Pronouns

Some indefinite pronouns (*all*, *any*, *each*, *few*, *most*, *none*, *some*) form the possessive case with the **preposition** *of*.

- We tested both packages and found the bacteria on the surface *of each*.

Other indefinite pronouns (*everyone*, *someone*, *anyone*, *no one*), however, use *'s*.

- *Everyone's* contribution is welcome.

prefixes

A prefix is a letter or group of letters placed in front of a root word that changes the meaning of the root word. When a prefix ends with a vowel and the root word begins with a vowel, the prefix is often separated from the root word with a **hyphen** (*re-enter*, *pro-active*, *anti-inflammatory*). Some words with the double vowel are written without a hyphen (*cooperate*) and others with or without a hyphen (*re-elect* or *reelect*).

Prefixes, such as *neo-* (derived from a Greek word meaning "new"), are often hyphenated when used with a proper **noun** (*neo-Keynesian*). Such prefixes are not normally hyphenated when used with common nouns, unless the base word begins with the same vowel (*neonatal*, *neo-orthodoxy*).

A hyphen may be necessary to clarify the meaning of a prefix; for example, *reform* means "correct" or "improve," and *re-form* means "change the shape of." When in doubt, check a current **dictionary**.

preparation

The preparation stage of the writing process is essential. By determining the needs of your **audience**, your **purpose**, the **context**, and the **scope** of coverage, you understand the information you will need to gather during **research**. See also **collaborative writing** and "Five Steps to Successful Writing" on page xv.

WRITER'S CHECKLIST **Preparing to Write**

- ✔ Determine who your readers are and learn certain key facts about them — their knowledge, attitudes, and needs relative to your subject.
- ✔ Determine the document's primary purpose: What exactly do you want your readers to know, to believe, or to be able to do when they have finished reading your document?
- ✔ Consider the context of your message and how it should affect your writing.
- ✔ Establish the scope of your document — the type and amount of detail you must include — not only by understanding your readers' needs and purpose but also by considering any external constraints, such as word limits for **trade journal articles** or the space limitations of Web pages. See also **writing for the Web**.
- ✔ Select the medium appropriate to your readers and purpose. See also **selecting the medium**.

prepositions

A preposition is a word that links a **noun** or **pronoun** to another sentence element by expressing such relationships as direction (*to*, *into*, *across*, *toward*), location (*at*, *in*, *on*, *under*, *over*, *beside*, *among*, *by*, *between*, *through*), time (*before*, *after*, *during*, *until*, *since*), or position (*for*, *against*, *with*). Together, the preposition, its **object** (the noun or pronoun), and the object's **modifiers** form a prepositional **phrase** that acts as a modifier.

- ▶ Answer help-line questions *in a courteous manner*.
  [The prepositional phrase *in a courteous manner* modifies the **verb** *answer*.]

The object of a preposition (the word or phrase following the preposition) is always in the objective **case**. When the object is a compound, both nouns and pronouns should be in the objective case. For example, the phrase "between you and *me*" is frequently and incorrectly written as "between you and *I*." *Me* is the objective form of the pronoun, and *I* is the subjective form.

Many words that function as prepositions also function as **adverbs**. If the word takes an object and functions as a connective, it is a preposition; if it has no object and functions as a modifier, it is an adverb.

PREPOSITIONS	The thermostat is *behind* the column *in* the conference room.
ADVERBS	The customer lagged *behind*; then he came *in* and sat down.

Certain verbs, adverbs, and adjectives are normally used with certain prepositions (interested *in*, aware *of*, equated *with*, adhere *to*, capable *of*, object *to*, infer *from*). See also **idioms**.

Prepositions at the End of a Sentence

A preposition at the end of a sentence can be an indication that the sentence is awkwardly constructed.

- ~~The~~ branch office ~~is where she was at.~~ She was at the.

However, if a preposition falls naturally at the end of a sentence, leave it there. ("I don't remember which file name I saved it *under*.")

Prepositions in Titles

Capitalize prepositions in **titles** when they are the first or last words, or when they contain five or more letters (unless you are following a style that recommends otherwise). See also **capitalization**.

- The newspaper column "*In* My Opinion" included a review of the article "New Concerns *About* Distance Education."

Preposition Errors

Do not use redundant prepositions, such as "off *of*," "in back *of*," "inside *of*," and "at *about*."

EXACT	The client will arrive at ~~about~~ four o'clock.
APPROXIMATE	The client will arrive ~~at~~ about four o'clock.

Avoid unnecessarily adding the preposition *up* to verbs.

- Call ~~up and~~ to see if he is in his office.

Do not omit necessary prepositions.

- He was oblivious and to not distracted by the view from his office window.

See also **conciseness** and **English as a second language**.

presentations

DIRECTORY

Determining Your Purpose 412
Analyzing Your Audience 412
Gathering Information 413
Structuring the Presentation 413
- The Introduction 413
- The Body 414
- The Closing 415
- Transitions 415

Using Visuals 416
- Flip Charts 416
- Whiteboard or Chalkboard 416
- Overhead Transparencies 416
- Presentation Software 416

Writer's Checklist: Using Visuals in a Presentation 418
Delivering a Presentation 419
- Practice 419
- Delivery Techniques That Work 419
- Presentation Anxiety 421

Writer's Checklist: Preparing for and Delivering a Presentation 421

The steps required to prepare an effective presentation parallel the steps you follow to write a document. As with writing a document, determine your **purpose** and analyze your **audience**. Then gather the facts that will support your point of view or proposal and logically organize that information. Presentations do, however, differ from written documents in a number of important ways. They are intended for listeners, not readers. Because you are speaking, your manner of delivery, the way you organize the material, and your supporting **visuals** require as much attention as your content.

Determining Your Purpose

Every presentation is given for a purpose, even if it is only to share information. To determine the primary purpose of your presentation, use the following question as a guide: What do I want the audience to know, to believe, or to do when I have finished the presentation? Based on the answer to that question, write a purpose statement that answers the *what?* and *why?* questions.

- The purpose of my presentation is to convince my company's chief information officer of the need to improve the appearance, content, and customer use of our company's Web site [*what*] so that she will be persuaded to allocate additional funds for site-development work in the next fiscal year [*why*].

Analyzing Your Audience

Once you have determined the desired end result of the presentation, analyze your audience so that you can tailor your presentation to their needs. Ask yourself these questions about your audience:

- What is your audience's level of experience or knowledge about your topic?
- What is the general educational level and age of your audience?
- What is your audience's attitude toward the topic you are speaking about, and—based on that attitude—what concerns, fears, or objections might your audience have?
- Do any subgroups in the audience have different concerns or needs?
- What questions might your audience ask about this topic?

Gathering Information

Once you have focused the presentation, you need to find the facts and arguments that support your point of view or the action you propose. As you gather information, keep in mind that you should give the audience only what will accomplish your goals; too much detail will overwhelm them, and too little will not adequately inform your listeners or support your recommendations. For detailed guidance about gathering information, see **research**.

Structuring the Presentation

When structuring the presentation, focus on your audience. Listeners are freshest at the outset and refocus their attention near the end. Take advantage of that pattern. Give your audience a brief overview of your presentation at the beginning, use the body to develop your ideas, and end with a summary of what you covered and, if appropriate, a call to action. See also **methods of development**.

The Introduction. Include in the **introduction** an opening that focuses your audience's attention, as in the following examples:

- [*Definition of a problem*] "You have to write an important report, but you'd like to incorporate lengthy handwritten notes from several meetings you attended. Your scanner will not read these notes, and you will have to type many pages. You groan because that seems an incredible waste of time. Have I got a solution for you!"
- [*An attention-getting statement*] "As many as 50 million Americans have high blood pressure."
- [*A rhetorical question*] "Would you be interested in a full-sized computer keyboard that is waterproof, is noiseless, and can be rolled up like a rubber mat?"

- [*A personal experience*] "As I sat at my computer one morning, deleting my eighth spam message of the day, I decided that it was time to take action to eliminate this time-waster."
- [*An appropriate quotation*] "According to researchers at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, 'Garlic and its cousin, the onion, confer major health benefits—including fighting cancer, infections, and heart disease.'"

Following your opening, use the introduction to set the stage for your audience by providing an overview of the presentation. Such an overview can include general or background information that will be needed to understand the detailed information in the body of your presentation. It can also show how you have organized the material.

- This presentation analyzes three high-volume, on-demand printers for us to consider purchasing. Based on a comparison of all three, I will recommend the one I believe best meets our needs. To do so, I'll discuss the following five points:

  1. Why we need a high-volume printer [*the problem*]
  2. The basics of on-demand technology [*general information*]
  3. The criteria I used to compare the three printer models [*comparison*]
  4. The printer models I compared and why [*possible solutions*]
  5. The printer I propose we buy [*proposed solution*]

The Body. If your goal is **persuasion**, present the evidence that will persuade the audience to agree with your conclusions and act on them. If you are discussing a problem, demonstrate that it exists and offer a solution or range of possible solutions. For example, if your introduction stated that the problem is low profits, high costs, outdated technology, or high employee absenteeism, you could use the following approach.

1. Prove your point.
   - Strategically organize the facts and data you need.
   - Present the information using easy-to-understand visuals.
2. Offer solutions.
   - Increase profits by lowering production costs.
   - Cut overhead to reduce costs, or abolish specific programs or product lines.
   - Replace outdated technology, or upgrade existing technology.
   - Offer employees more flexibility in their work schedules or offer them other incentives.
3. Anticipate questions ("How much will it cost?") and objections ("We're too busy now—when would we have time to learn

the new software?") and incorporate the answers into your presentation.

The Closing. Fulfill the goals of your presentation in the closing. If your purpose is to motivate the listeners to take action, ask them to do what you want them to do; if your purpose is to get your audience to think about something, summarize what you want them to think about. Many presenters make the mistake of not actually closing—they simply quit talking, shuffle papers, and then walk away.

Because your closing is what your audience is most likely to remember, use that time to be strong and persuasive. Consider the following typical closing.

- Based on all the data, I believe that the Worthington TechLine 5510 Production Printer best suits our needs. It produces 40 pages per minute more than its closest competitor and provides modular systems that can be upgraded to support new applications. The Worthington is also compatible with our current computer network, and staff training at our site is included with our purchase. Although the initial cost is higher than that for the other two models, the additional capabilities, compatibility with most standard environments, lower maintenance costs, and strong customer support services make it a better value.

  I recommend we allocate the funds necessary for this printer by the fifteenth of this month in order to be well prepared for the production of next quarter's customer publications.

This closing brings the presentation full circle and asks the audience to fulfill the purpose of the presentation—exactly what a **conclusion** should do.

Transitions. Planned **transitions** should appear between the introduction and the body, between major points in the body, and between the body and the closing. Transitions are simply a sentence or two to let the audience know that you are moving from one topic to the next. They also prevent a choppy presentation and provide the audience with assurance that you know where you are going and how to get there.

- Before getting into the specifics of each printer I compared, I'd like to present the benefits of networked, on-demand printers in general. That information will provide you with the background you'll need to compare the differences among the printers and their capabilities discussed in this presentation.

It is also a good idea to pause for a moment after you have delivered a transition between topics to let your listeners shift gears with you. Remember, they do not know your plan.

Using Visuals

Well-planned **visuals** not only add interest and emphasis to your presentation but also clarify and simplify your message because they communicate clearly, quickly, and vividly. Charts, graphs, and illustrations can greatly increase audience understanding and retention of information, especially for complex issues and technical information that could otherwise be misunderstood or overlooked.

❖ ETHICS NOTE Be sure to provide credit for any visual taken from a print or an online source. You can include a citation either on an individual visual (such as a slide) or in a list of references or works cited that you distribute to your audience. For information on citing visuals from print or Web sources, see **documenting sources**. ❖

You can create and present the visual components of your presentation by using a variety of media—flip charts, whiteboard or chalkboard, overhead transparencies, slides, or computer presentation software. See also **layout and design**.

Flip Charts. Flip charts are ideal for smaller groups in a conference room or classroom and are also ideal for **brainstorming** with your audience.

Whiteboard or Chalkboard. The whiteboard or chalkboard common to classrooms is convenient for creating sketches and for jotting notes during your presentation. If your presentation requires extensive notes or complex **drawings**, however, prepare handouts on which the audience can jot notes and which they can keep for future reference.

Overhead Transparencies. With transparencies you can create a series of overlays to explain a complex device or system, adding (or removing) the overlays one at a time. You can also lay a sheet of paper over a list of items on a transparency, uncovering one item at a time as you discuss it, to focus audience attention on each point in the sequence.

Presentation Software. Presentation software, such as Microsoft PowerPoint, Corel Presentations, and OpenOffice.org Impress, lets you create your presentation on your computer. You can develop charts and graphs with data from spreadsheet software or locate visuals on the Web, and then import those files into your presentation. This software also offers standard templates and other features that help you design effective visuals and integrated text. Enhancements include a selection of typefaces, highlighting devices, background textures and

colors, and clip-art images. Images can also be printed out for use as overhead transparencies or handouts. However, avoid using too many enhancements, which may distract viewers from your message. Figure P–3 shows well-balanced slides for a presentation based on the sample "formal report" in Figure F–5.

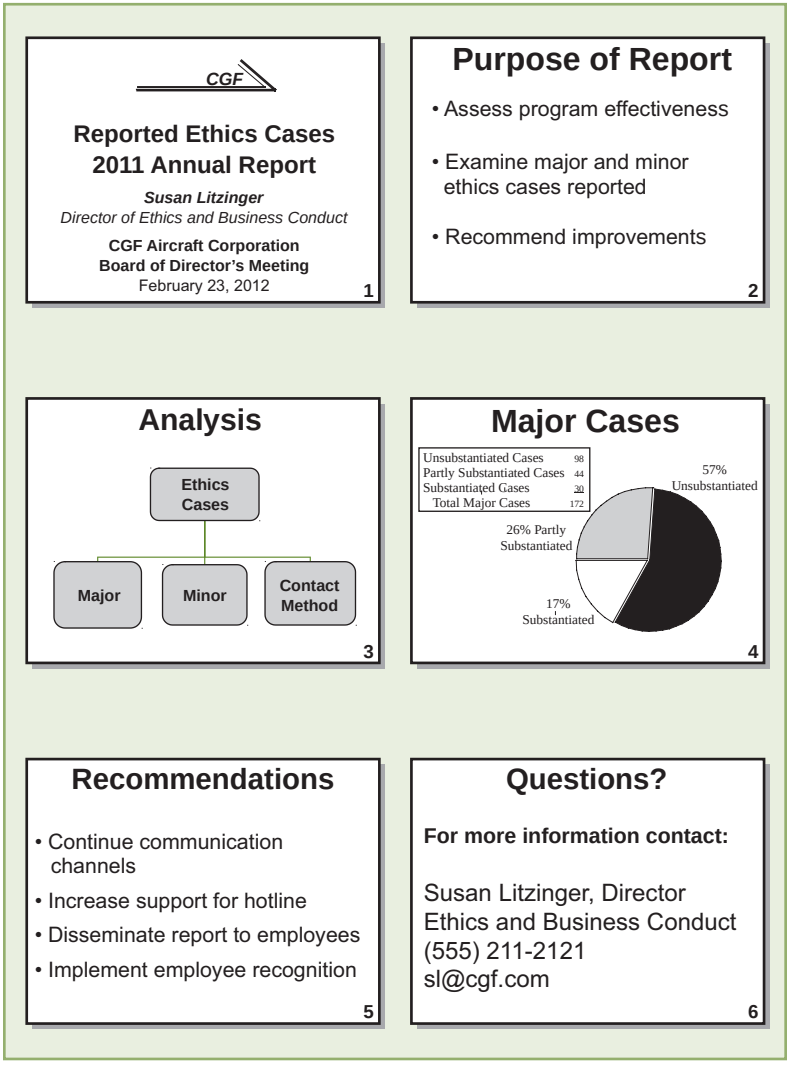


FIGURE P–3. Slides for a Presentation

P

PROFESSIONALISM NOTE Rehearse your presentation using your electronic slides, and practice your transitions from slide to slide. Also practice loading your presentation and anticipate any technical difficulties that might arise. Should you encounter a technical snag during the presentation, stay calm and give yourself time to solve the problem. If you cannot solve the problem, move on without the technology. As a backup, carry a printout of your electronic presentation and copies for your audience as well as an extra electronic copy on a storage medium.

WRITER'S CHECKLIST **Using Visuals in a Presentation**

- ✔ Use text sparingly in visuals. Use bulleted or numbered lists, keeping them in parallel structure and with balanced content. Use numbers if the sequence is important and bullets if it is not.
- ✔ Limit the number of bulleted or numbered items to no more than five or six per visual.
- ✔ Limit each visual to no more than 40 to 45 words. Any more will clutter the visual and force you to use a smaller font, which could impair the audience's ability to read it.
- ✔ Make your visuals consistent in type style, size, and spacing.
- ✔ Use a type size visible to members of the audience at the back of the room. Type should be boldface and no smaller than 30 points. For headings, 45- or 50-point type works even better.
- ✔ Use graphs and charts to show data trends. Use only one or two illustrations per visual to avoid clutter and confusion.
- ✔ Avoid using sound or visual effects presentation software that tends to undermine the professionalism of your presentation and distract from the content.
- ✔ Make the contrast between your text and the background sharp. Use light backgrounds with dark lettering and avoid textured or decorated backgrounds.
- ✔ Use no more than 12 visuals per presentation. Any more will tax the audience's concentration.
- ✔ Match your delivery of the content to your visuals. Do not put one visual on the screen and talk about the previous visual or, even worse, the next one.
- ✔ Do not read the text on your visual word for word. Your audience can read the visuals; they look to you to provide the key points in detail.

WEB LINK	Preparing Presentation Slides
For a helpful tutorial on creating effective slides, see ***bedfordstmartins.com/alred*** and select *Try a tutorial,* "On preparing presentation slides." For links to additional information and tutorials for using presentation software, see ***bedfordstmartins.com/alred*** and select *Links for Handbook Entries.*	

Delivering a Presentation

Once you have outlined and drafted your presentation and prepared your visuals, you are ready to practice your presentation and delivery techniques.

Practice. Familiarize yourself with the sequence of the material—major topics, notes, and visuals—in your outline. Once you feel comfortable with the content, you are ready to practice the presentation (in front of others if possible).

PRACTICE ON YOUR FEET AND OUT LOUD. Try to practice in the room where you will give the presentation. Practicing on-site helps you get the feel of the room: the lighting, the arrangement of the chairs, the position of electrical outlets and switches, and so forth. Practice out loud to gauge the length of your presentation, to uncover problems such as awkward transitions, and to eliminate verbal tics (such as "um," "you know," and "like").

PRACTICE WITH YOUR VISUALS AND TEXT. Integrate your visuals into your practice sessions to help your presentation go more smoothly. Operate the equipment (computer, slide projector, or overhead projector) until you are comfortable with it. Decide if you want to use a remote control or wireless mouse or if you want to have someone else advance your slides. Even if things go wrong, being prepared and practiced will give you the confidence and poise to continue.

Delivery Techniques That Work. Your delivery is both audible and visual. In addition to your words and message, your nonverbal communication affects your audience. Be animated—your words have impact and staying power when they are delivered with physical and vocal animation. If you want listeners to share your point of view, show enthusiasm for your topic. The most common delivery techniques include making eye contact; using movement and gestures; and varying voice inflection, projection, and pace.

EYE CONTACT. The best way to establish rapport with your audience is through eye contact. In a large audience, directly address those people who seem most responsive to you in different parts of the room. Doing that helps you establish rapport with your listeners by holding their attention and gives you important visual cues that let you know how your message is being received. Do the listeners seem engaged and actively listening? Based on your observations, you may need to adjust the pace of your presentation.

MOVEMENT. Animate the presentation with physical movement. Take a step or two to one side after you have been talking for a minute or so. That type of movement is most effective at transitional points in your presentation between major topics or after pauses or emphases. Too much movement, however, can be distracting, so try not to pace.

Another way to integrate movement into your presentation is to walk to the screen and point to the visual as you discuss it. Touch the screen with the pointer and then turn back to the audience before beginning to speak (remember the three *t*'s: touch, turn, and talk).

GESTURES. Gestures both animate your presentation and help communicate your message. Most people gesture naturally when they talk; nervousness, however, can inhibit gesturing during a presentation. Keep one hand free and use that hand to gesture.

VOICE. Your voice can be an effective tool in communicating your sincerity, enthusiasm, and command of your topic. Use it to your advantage to project your credibility. *Vocal inflection* is the rise and fall of your voice at different times, such as the way your voice naturally rises at the end of a question ("You want it *when?*"). A conversational delivery and eye contact promote the feeling among members of the audience that you are addressing them directly. Use vocal inflection to highlight differences between key and subordinate points in your presentation.

PROJECTION. Most presenters think they are speaking louder than they are. Remember that your presentation is ineffective for anyone in the audience who cannot hear you. If listeners must strain to hear you, they may give up trying to listen. Correct projection problems by practicing out loud with someone listening from the back of the room.

PACE. Be aware of the speed at which you deliver your presentation. If you speak too fast, your words will run together, making it difficult for your audience to follow. If you speak too slowly, your listeners will become impatient and distracted.

Presentation Anxiety. Everyone experiences nervousness before a presentation. Survey after survey reveals that for most people dread of public speaking ranks among their top five fears. Instead of letting fear inhibit you, focus on channeling your nervous energy into a helpful stimulant. Practice will help you, but the best way to master anxiety is to know your topic thoroughly—knowing what you are going to say and how you are going to say it will help you gain confidence and reduce anxiety as you become immersed in your subject.

WRITER'S CHECKLIST **Preparing for and Delivering a Presentation**

- ✔ Prepare a set of notes that will trigger your memory during the presentation.
- ✔ Make as much eye contact as possible with your audience to establish rapport and maximize opportunities for audience feedback.
- ✔ Animate your delivery by integrating movement, gestures, and vocal inflection into your presentation. However, keep your movements and speech patterns natural.
- ✔ Speak loudly and slowly enough to be heard and understood.
- ✔ Review the earlier checklist on using visuals as well as advice on delivery in this entry.

For information and tips on communicating with cross-cultural audiences, see **global communication**, **global graphics**, and **international correspondence**.

P

principal / principle

Principal, meaning "an amount of money on which interest is earned or paid" or "a chief official in a school or court proceeding," is sometimes confused with *principle*, which means "a basic truth or belief."

- The bank will pay 3.5 percent on the *principal*.
- He sent a letter to the *principal* of the high school.
- She is a person of unwavering *principles*.

Principal is also an adjective, meaning "main" or "primary." ("My *principal* objection is that it will be too expensive.")

process explanation

A process explanation may describe the steps in a process, an operation, or a procedure, such as the steps necessary to design and manufacture a product. The **introduction** often presents a brief overview of the process or lets **readers** know why it is important for them to become familiar with the process you are explaining. Be sure to define terms that readers might not understand and provide **visuals** to clarify the process. See also **defining terms** and **instructions**.

In describing a process, use transitional words and phrases to create unity within **paragraphs**, and select **headings** to provide **transition** from one step to the next. Often documents include process explanations, such as the steps described under the heading "testing procedures" in the laboratory report shown in Figure L–1 on page 311.

WEB LINK	Samples of Process Explanation
For a detailed process explanation that includes a supporting visual, see ***bedfordstmartins.com/alred*** and select *Model Documents Gallery*.	

progress and activity reports

Progress reports provide details on the tasks completed for major workplace projects, whereas *activity reports* focus on the ongoing work of individual employees. Both are sometimes called *status reports*. Although many organizations use standardized forms for these **reports**, the content and structure shown in Figures P–4 and P–5 are typical.

Progress Reports

A progress report provides information to decision-makers about the status of a project—whether it is on schedule and within budget. Progress reports are often submitted by a contracting company to a client company, as shown in Figure P–4. They are used mainly for projects that involve many steps over a period of time and are issued at regular intervals to describe what has been done and what remains to be done. Progress reports help projects run smoothly by helping managers assign work, adjust schedules, allocate budgets, and order supplies and equipment. All progress reports for a particular project should have the same **format**.

Hobard Construction Company
9032 Salem Avenue
Lubbock, TX 79409

www.hobardcc.com
(808) 769-0832
Fax: (808) 769-5327

August 15, 2012

Walter M. Wazuski
County Administrator
109 Grand Avenue
Manchester, NH 03103

Dear Mr. Wazuski:

Subject: Progress Report 8 for July 31, 2012

The renovation of the County Courthouse is progressing on schedule and within budget. Although the cost of certain materials is higher than our original bid indicated, we expect to complete the project without exceeding the estimated costs because the speed with which the project is being completed will reduce overall labor expenses.

Costs
Materials used to date have cost $178,600, and labor costs have been $293,000 (including some subcontracted plumbing). Our estimate for the remainder of the materials is $159,000; remaining labor costs should not exceed $400,000.

Work Completed
As of July 31, we had finished the installation of the circuit-breaker panels and meters, the level-one service outlets, and all the subfloor wiring. The upgrading of the courtroom, the upgrading of the records-storage room, and the replacement of the air-conditioning units are in the preliminary stages.

Work Scheduled
We have scheduled the upgrading of the courtroom to take place from August 29 to October 9, the upgrading of the records-storage room from October 11 to November 16, and the replacement of the air-conditioning units from November 21 to December 17. We see no difficulty in having the job finished by the scheduled date of December 21.

Sincerely yours,

Tran Nuguélen

Tran Nuguélen
ntran@hobardcc.com

FIGURE P–4. Progress Report (Using Letter Format)

INTEROFFICE MEMO

Date: June 8, 2012

To: Kathryn Hunter, Director of IT

From: Wayne Tribinski, Manager, Applications Programs WT

Subject: Activity Report for May 2012

We are dealing with the following projects and problems, as of May 31.

Projects

1. For the *Software Training Mailing Campaign*, we anticipate producing a set of labels for mailing software training information to customers by June 13.
2. The *Search Project* is on hold until the PL/I training has been completed, probably by the end of June.
3. The project to provide a database for the *Information Management System* has been expanded in scope to provide a database for all training activities. We are rescheduling the project to take the new scope into account.

Problems

The *Information Management System* has been delayed. The original schedule was based on the assumption that a systems analyst who was familiar with the system would work on this project. Instead, the project was assigned to a newly hired systems analyst who was inexperienced and required much more learning time than expected.

Bill Michaels, whose activity report is attached, is correcting a problem in the *CNG Software*. This correction may take a week.

Plans for Next Month

- Complete the *Software Training Mailing Campaign.*
- Resume the *Search Project.*
- Restart the project to provide a database on information management with a schedule that reflects its new scope.
- Write a report to justify the addition of two software developers to my department.
- Congratulate publicly the recipients of Meritorious Achievement Awards: Bill Thomasson and Nancy O'Rourke.

Current Staffing Level

Current staff: 11
Open requisitions: 0

Attachment

FIGURE P–5. Activity Report (Using Printed Memo)

The **introduction** to the first progress report should identify the project, methods used, necessary materials, expenditures, and completion date. Subsequent reports summarize the progress achieved since the preceding report and list the steps that remain to be taken. The body of the progress report should describe the project's status, including details such as schedules and costs, a statement of the work completed, and perhaps an estimate of future progress. The report ends with **conclusions** and recommendations about changes in the schedule, materials, techniques, and other information important to the project.

Activity Reports

Within an organization, employees often submit activity reports to managers on the status of ongoing projects. Managers may combine the activity reports of several individuals or teams into larger activity reports and, in turn, submit those larger reports to their own managers. The activity report shown in Figure P–5 was submitted by a manager (Wayne Tribinski) who supervises 11 employees; the reader of the report (Kathryn Hunter) is Tribinski's manager.

Because the activity report is issued periodically (usually monthly) and contains material familiar to its **readers**, it normally needs no introduction or conclusion, although it may need a brief opening to provide **context**. Although the format varies from company to company, the following sections are typical: Current Projects, Current Problems, Plans for the Next Period, and Current Staffing Levels (for managers).

P

pronoun reference

A **pronoun** should refer clearly to a specific antecedent. Avoid vague and uncertain references.

, which was a big one,
- We got the account after we wrote the proposal. ~~It was a big one.~~

For **coherence**, place pronouns as close as possible to their antecedents—distance increases the likelihood of **ambiguity**.

, praised for its architectural design, is
- The office building next to City Hall ~~is praised for its architectural design.~~

A general (or broad) reference or one that has no real antecedent is a problem that often occurs when the word *this* is used by itself.

- He deals with personnel problems in his work. This experience helps him in his personal life.

Another common problem is a hidden reference, which has only an implied antecedent.

- A high-lipid, low-carbohydrate diet is "ketogenic" because it favors the ~~their~~ of ketone bodies formation.

Do not repeat an antecedent in parentheses following the pronoun. If you feel you must identify the pronoun's antecedent in that way, rewrite the sentence.

AWKWARD	The senior partner first met Bob Evans when he (Evans) was a trainee.
IMPROVED	Bob Evans was a trainee when the senior partner first met him.
IMPROVED	When the senior partner first met him, Bob Evans was a trainee.

For advice on avoiding pronoun-reference problems with gender, see **biased language**.

pronouns

DIRECTORY
Case 428 Number 430
Gender 429 Person 430

A pronoun is a word that is used as a substitute for a **noun** (the noun for which a pronoun substitutes is called the *antecedent*). Using pronouns in place of nouns relieves the monotony of repeating the same noun over and over. See also **pronoun reference**.

Personal pronouns refer to the person or people speaking (*I*, *me*, *my*, *mine*; *we*, *us*, *our*, *ours*); the person or people spoken to (*you*, *your*, *yours*); or the person, people, or thing(s) spoken of (*he*, *him*, *his*; *she*, *her*, *hers*; *it*, *its*; *they*, *them*, *their*, *theirs*). See also **person** and **point of view**.

- If *their* figures are correct, *ours* must be in error.

Demonstrative pronouns (*this*, *these*, *that*, *those*) indicate or point out the thing being referred to.

- *This* is my desk. *These* are my coworkers. *That* will be a difficult job. *Those* are incorrect figures.

Relative pronouns (*who*, *whom*, *which*, *that*) perform a dual function: (1) They take the place of nouns and (2) they connect and establish the relationship between a dependent **clause** and its main clause.

- The department manager decided *who* would be hired.

Interrogative pronouns (*who*, *whom*, *what*, *which*) are used to ask questions.

- *What* is the trouble?

Indefinite pronouns specify a class or group of persons or things rather than a particular person or thing (*all*, *another*, *any*, *anyone*, *anything*, *both*, *each*, *either*, *everybody*, *few*, *many*, *most*, *much*, *neither*, *nobody*, *none*, *several*, *some*, *such*).

- Not *everyone* liked the new procedures; *some* even refused to follow them.

A *reflexive pronoun*, which always ends with the suffix *-self* or *-selves*, indicates that the subject of the sentence acts upon itself. See also **sentence construction**.

- The electrician accidentally shocked *herself*.

The reflexive pronouns are *myself*, *yourself*, *himself*, *herself*, *itself*, *oneself*, *ourselves*, *yourselves*, and *themselves*. *Myself* is not a substitute for *I* or *me* as a personal pronoun.

- Victor and ~~myself~~ *I* completed the report on time.
- The assignment was given to Ingrid and ~~myself~~ *me*.

Intensive pronouns are identical in form to the reflexive pronouns, but they perform a different function: Intensive pronouns emphasize their antecedents.

- I *myself* asked the same question.

Reciprocal pronouns (*one another*, *each other*) indicate the relationship of one item to another. *Each other* is commonly used when referring to two persons or things and *one another* when referring to more than two.

- Lashell and Kara work well with *each other*.
- The crew members work well with *one another*.

Case

Pronouns have forms to show the subjective, objective, and possessive cases.

SINGULAR	SUBJECTIVE	OBJECTIVE	POSSESSIVE
First person	I	me	my, mine
Second person	you	you	your, yours
Third person	he, she, it	him, her, it	his, her, hers, its
PLURAL	**SUBJECTIVE**	**OBJECTIVE**	**POSSESSIVE**
First person	we	us	our, ours
Second person	you	you	your, yours
Third person	they	them	their, theirs

ESL TIPS for Using Possessive Pronouns

In many languages, possessive pronouns agree in number and gender with the nouns they modify. In English, however, possessive pronouns agree in number and gender with their antecedents. Check your writing carefully for agreement between a possessive pronoun and the word, phrase, or clause to which it refers.

- The *woman* brought *her* brother a cup of coffee.
- *Robert* sent *his* mother flowers on Mother's Day.

A pronoun that functions as the subject of a clause or sentence is in the subjective **case** (*I*, *we*, *he*, *she*, *it*, *you*, *they*, *who*). The subjective case is also used when the pronoun follows a linking **verb**.

- *She* is my boss.
- My boss is *she*.

A pronoun that functions as the object of a verb or **preposition** is in the objective case (*me*, *us*, *him*, *her*, *it*, *you*, *them*, *whom*).

- Ms. Davis hired Tom and *me*. [object of verb]
- Between *you* and *me*, she's wrong. [object of preposition]

A pronoun that expresses ownership is in the **possessive case** (*my*, *mine*, *our*, *ours*, *his*, *her*, *hers*, *its*, *your*, *yours*, *their*, *theirs*, *whose*).

- He took *his* notes with him on the business trip.
- We took *our* notes with us on the business trip.

A pronoun **appositive** takes the case of its antecedent.

- Two systems analysts, Joe and *I*, were selected to represent the company.
  [*Joe and I* is in apposition to the subject, *two systems analysts*, and must therefore be in the subjective case.]
- The manager selected two representatives—Joe and *me*.
  [*Joe and me* is in apposition to *two representatives*, which is the object of the verb, *selected*, and therefore must be in the objective case.]

If you have difficulty determining the case of a compound pronoun, try using the pronoun singly.

- In his letter, Eldon mentioned *him* and *me*.
  In his letter, Eldon mentioned *him*.
  In his letter, Eldon mentioned *me*.
- *They* and *we* must discuss the terms of the merger.
  They must discuss the terms of the merger.
  We must discuss the terms of the merger.

When a pronoun modifies a noun, try it without the noun to determine its case.

- [*We / Us*] pilots fly our own planes.
  We fly our own planes.
  [You would not write, "*Us* fly our own planes."]
- He addressed his remarks directly to [*we / us*] technicians.
  He addressed his remarks directly to *us*.
  [You would not write, "He addressed his remarks directly to *we*."]

Gender

A pronoun must agree in gender with its antecedent. A problem sometimes occurs because the masculine pronoun has traditionally been used to refer to both sexes. To avoid the sexual bias implied in such usage, use *he or she* or the plural form of the pronoun, *they*.

- All ~~Each~~ may stay or go as they choose. ~~he chooses.~~

As in this example, when the singular pronoun (*he*) changes to the plural (*they*), the singular indefinite pronoun (*each*) must also change to its plural form (*all*). See also **biased language**.

Number

Number is a frequent problem with only a few indefinite pronouns (*each*, *either*, *neither*, and those ending with *-body* or *-one*, such as *anybody*, *anyone*, *everybody*, *everyone*, *nobody*, *no one*, *somebody*, *someone*) that are normally singular and so require singular verbs and are referred to by singular pronouns.

- As *each member arrives* for the meeting, please hand *him or her* a copy of the confidential report. *Everyone* must return the copy before *he or she* leaves. *Everybody* on the committee *understands* that *neither* of our major competitors *is* aware of the new process we have developed.

Person

Third-person personal pronouns usually have antecedents.

- Gina presented the report to the members of the board of directors. *She* [Gina] first summarized *it* [the report] for *them* [the directors] and then asked for questions.

First- and second-person personal pronouns do not normally require antecedents.

- *I* like my job.
- *You* were on vacation at the time.
- *We* all worked hard on the project.

proofreaders' marks

Publishers have established symbols called *proofreaders' marks* that writers and editors use to communicate in the production of publications. Familiarity with those symbols makes it easy for you to communicate your changes to others. Figure P–6 lists standard proofreaders' marks. For using Comment and Track Changes in word-processing programs, see *Digital Tip: Incorporating Tracked Changes* on page 510.

MARK/SYMBOL	MEANING	EXAMPLE	CORRECTED TYPE
	Delete	the ~~manager's~~ report	the report
	Insert	the manager's report	the manager's report
stet	Let stand	the ~~manager's~~ report	the manager's report
cap	Capitalize	the monday meeting	the Monday meeting
lc	Lowercase	the Monday Meeting	the Monday meeting
tr	Transpose	the cover lettre	the cover letter
	Close space	a loud speaker	a loudspeaker
	Insert space	a loudspeaker	a loud speaker
	Paragraph	…report. The meeting…	…report. The meeting…
	Run in with previous line or paragraph	…report. The meeting…	…report. The meeting…
ital	Italicize	the New York Times	the *New York Times*
bf	Boldface	Use boldface sparingly.	Use **boldface** sparingly.
	Insert period	I wrote the e-mail	I wrote the e-mail.
	Insert comma	However we cannot…	However, we cannot…
	Insert hyphen	clear cut decision	clear-cut decision
m	Insert em dash	Our goal productivity	Our goal—productivity
or :	Insert colon	We need the following	We need the following:
or ;	Insert semicolon	we finished we achieved	we finished; we achieved
	Insert quotation marks	He said, I agree.	He said, "I agree."
	Insert apostrophe	the managers report	the manager's report

FIGURE P–6. Proofreaders' Marks

proofreading

Proofreading is essential whether you are writing a brief **e-mail** or a **résumé**. Grammar checkers and spell checkers are important aids to proofreading, but they can make writers overconfident. If a typographical error results in a legitimate English word (for example, *coarse* instead of *course*), the spell checker will not flag the misspelling. You may

find some of the tactics discussed in **revision** useful when proofreading; in fact, you may find passages during proofreading that will require further revision.

◖ PROFESSIONALISM NOTE Proofreading not only demonstrates that you respect readers (who can be distracted, irritated, or misled by errors in writing) but also reflects that you are professional in the way you approach all your work. ◗

Whether the material you proofread is your own writing or that of someone else, consider proofreading in several stages. Although you need to tailor the stages to the specific document and to your own problem areas, the following *Writer's Checklist* should provide a useful starting point for proofreading. Consider using standard **proofreaders' marks** for proofreading someone else's document.

WRITER'S CHECKLIST **Proofreading in Stages**

FIRST-STAGE REVIEW

- ✔ Appropriate **format**, as for **reports** or **correspondence**
- ✔ Consistent style, including **headings**, terminology, spacing, and fonts
- ✔ Correct numbering of figures and **tables**

SECOND-STAGE REVIEW

- ✔ Specific **grammar** and **usage** problems
- ✔ Appropriate **punctuation**
- ✔ Correct and consistent **abbreviations** and **capitalization**
- ✔ Correct **spelling** (especially names and places)
- ✔ Complete Web or e-mail addresses
- ✔ Accurate data in tables and **lists**
- ✔ Cut-and-paste errors; for example, a result of moved or deleted text and **numbers**

FINAL-STAGE REVIEW

- ✔ Survey of your overall goals: **audience** needs and **purpose**
- ✔ Appearance of the document (see **layout and design**)
- ✔ Review by a trusted colleague, especially for crucial documents (see **collaborative writing**)

DIGITAL TIP

Proofreading for Format Consistency

To check your documents for consistency, you should use both a "macro" and a "micro"approach. Zooming out in your word-processing software will show you the general appearance of your document and help you spot any problems with layout or structure. Printing your document and examining it slowly and carefully will help you notice inconsistencies in the details of your document, such as typography, line spacing, and indentation. For more detailed advice about these two techniques for reviewing documents, go to ***bedfordstmartins.com/alred*** and select *Digital Tips*, "Proofreading for Format Consistency."

proposals

DIRECTORY

Proposal Strategies 434
- Audience and Purpose 434
- Project Management 434

Proposal Context and Types 435

Writer's Checklist: Writing Persuasive Proposals 435

Internal Proposals 436
- Informal Internal Proposals 436
- Formal Internal Proposals 436

External Proposals 439
- Solicited Proposals 439
- Unsolicited Proposals 440
- Sales Proposals 440
- Grant Proposals (see entry **grant proposals**)

A proposal is a document written to persuade readers that what is proposed will benefit them by solving a problem or fulfilling a need. When you write a proposal, therefore, you must convince readers that they need what you are proposing, that it is practical and appropriate, and that you are the right person or organization to provide the proposed product or service. See also **persuasion** and **"you" viewpoint**.

Proposal Strategies

For any proposal, support your assertions with relevant facts, statistics, and examples. Your supporting evidence must lead logically to your proposed plan of action or solution. Cite relevant sources of information that provide strong credibility to your argument. Avoid ambiguity, do not wander from your main point, and never make false claims. See **ethics in writing**.

Audience and Purpose. Proposals often require more than one level of approval, so take into account all the readers in your **audience**. Consider especially their levels of technical knowledge of the subject. For example, if your primary reader is an expert on your subject but a supervisor who must also approve the proposal is not, provide an **executive summary** written in nontechnical language for the supervisor. You might also include a **glossary** of terms used in the body of the proposal or an **appendix** that explains highly detailed information in nontechnical language. If your primary reader is not an expert but a supervisor is, write the proposal with the nonexpert in mind and include an appendix that contains the technical details for experts.

Writing a persuasive proposal can be simplified by composing a concise statement of **purpose**—the exact problem or opportunity that your proposal is designed to address and how you plan to persuade your readers to accept what you propose. Composing a purpose statement before outlining and writing your proposal will also help you and any collaborators understand the direction, **scope**, and goals of your proposal.

Project Management. Proposal writers are often faced with writing high-quality, persuasive proposals under tight organizational deadlines. Dividing the task into manageable parts is the key to accomplishing your goals, especially when proposals involve substantial **collaborative writing**. For example, you might set deadlines for completing various proposal sections or stages of the writing process.*

*For help with project management, see JoAnn T. Hackos, *Information Develpment: Managing Your Documentation Projects, Portfolio, and People* (Indianapolis, IN: Wiley, 2007).

WEB LINK	Proposal Management Software
Proposal management software is becoming increasingly popular in companies that manage frequent and extensive proposal writing projects. Such software allows businesses to automate the more routine tasks while easily tracking multiple versions. For links to proposal management software, see ***bedfordstmartins.com/alred*** and select *Links for Handbook Entries*.	

Proposal Context and Types

Proposals are written within a specific **context**. As that entry describes, understanding the context will help you determine the most appropriate writing strategy. In general, to persuade those within your organization to make a change or an improvement or perhaps to fund a project, you would write an *internal proposal*. To persuade those outside your company to agree to a plan or take a course of action, you would write an *external proposal*.

WRITER'S CHECKLIST **Writing Persuasive Proposals**

- ✔ Analyze your audience carefully to determine how to best meet your readers' needs or requirements.
- ✔ Write a concise purpose statement at the outset to clarify your proposal's goals.
- ✔ Divide the writing task into manageable segments and develop a timeline for completing tasks.
- ✔ Review the descriptions of proposal contexts, structure, and types in this entry.
- ✔ Focus on the proposal's benefits to readers and anticipate their questions or objections.
- ✔ Incorporate evidence to support the claims of your proposal.
- ✔ Select an appropriate, visually appealing format. See **layout and design**.
- ✔ Use a confident, positive **tone** throughout the proposal.

Internal Proposals

The purpose of an internal proposal is to suggest a change or an improvement within the writer's organization. Often in memo format, it is addressed to a superior within the organization who has the authority to accept or reject the proposal. Internal proposals are typically reviewed by one or more departments for cost, practicality, and potential benefits, so take account of all relevant audience members. Two common types of internal proposals—informal and formal—are often distinguished from each other by the frequency with which they are written and by the degree of change they propose.

Informal Internal Proposals. Informal internal proposals are the most common type of proposal and typically include small spending requests, requests for permission to hire new employees or increase salaries, and requests to attend conferences or purchase new equipment. In writing informal or routine proposals, highlight any key benefits to be realized.

WEB LINK	Internal Proposals
For examples of brief solicited and unsolicited proposals, see ***bedfordstmartins.com/alred*** and select *Model Documents Gallery*.	

Formal Internal Proposals. Formal internal proposals usually involve requests to commit large sums of money. They are often organized into sections that describe a problem, propose a solution, and offer to implement the suggested recommendation. The body, in turn, is further divided into sections to reflect the subject matter. The proposal may begin with a section describing the background or history of an issue and go on to discuss options for addressing the issue in separate sections.

The *introduction* of your internal proposal should establish that a problem exists and needs a solution. If the audience is not convinced that there is a problem, your proposal will not succeed. After you identify the problem, summarize your proposed solution and indicate its benefits and estimated total cost. Notice how the introduction in Figure P–7 states the problem directly and then summarizes the writer's proposed solution.

WEB LINK	Complete Internal Proposal
For a complete version of Figure P–7 with annotations, see ***bedfordstmartins.com/alred*** and select *Model Documents Gallery*.	

ABO, Inc.
Interoffice Memo

To: Joan Marlow, Director, Human Resources Division

From: Leslie Galusha, Chief
Employee Benefits Department
LG

Date: June 15, 2012

Subject: Employee Fitness and Health-Care Costs

Health-care and workers' compensation insurance costs at ABO, Inc., have risen 100 percent over the last six years. In 2006, costs were $5,675 per employee per year; in 2012, they have reached $11,560 per employee per year. This doubling of costs mirrors a national trend, with health-care costs anticipated to continue to rise at the same rate for the next ten years. Controlling these escalating expenses will be essential. They are eating into ABO's profit margin because the company currently pays 70 percent of the costs for employee coverage.

Healthy employees bring direct financial benefits to companies in the form of lower employee insurance costs, lower absenteeism rates, and reduced turnover. Regular physical exercise promotes fit, healthy people by reducing the risk of coronary heart disease, diabetes, osteoporosis, hypertension, and stress-related problems. I propose that to promote regular, vigorous physical exercise for our employees, ABO implement a health-care program that focuses on employee fitness. . . .

Problem of Health-Care Costs
The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) recently estimated that health-care costs in the United States will triple by the year 2020. Corporate expenses for health care are rising at such a fast rate that, if unchecked, in seven years they will significantly erode corporate profits.

According to HHS, people who do not participate in a regular and vigorous exercise program incur double the health-care costs and are hospitalized 30 percent more days than people who exercise regularly. Nonexercisers are also 41 percent more likely to submit medical claims over $10,000 at some point during their careers than are those who exercise regularly.

These figures are further supported by data from independent studies. A model created by the National Institutes of Health (NIH) . . .

FIGURE P–7. Special-Purpose Internal Proposal (*continued*) (Introduction and Body)

Joan Marlow 2 June 15, 2012

Proposed Solutions for ABO
The benefits of regular, vigorous physical activity for employees and companies are compelling. To achieve these benefits at ABO, I propose that we choose from one of two possible options: Build in-house fitness centers at our warehouse facilities, or offer employees several options for membership at a national fitness club. The following analysis compares . . .

Recommendation and Conclusion
I recommend that ABO, Inc., participate in the corporate membership program at AeroFitness Clubs, Inc., by subsidizing employee memberships. By subsidizing memberships, ABO shows its commitment to the importance of a fit workforce. Club membership allows employees at all five ABO warehouses to participate in the program. The more employees who participate, the greater the long-term savings. . . .

Enrolling employees in the corporate program at AeroFitness would allow them to receive a one-month free trial membership. Those interested in continuing could then join the club and pay half of the one-time membership fee. . . .

Implementing this program will help ABO, Inc., reduce its health-care costs while building stronger employee relations by offering employees a desirable benefit. If this proposal is adopted, I have some additional thoughts about publicizing the program to encourage employee participation. I look forward to discussing the details of this proposal with you and answering any questions you may have.

FIGURE P–7. Special-Purpose Internal Proposal (*continued*) (Conclusion)

The *body* of your internal proposal should offer a practical solution to the problem and provide the details necessary to inform and persuade your readers. In the body, describe the problem for which you are offering a solution; the methodology of your proposed solution; details about equipment, materials, and staff; cost breakdowns; and a comprehensive schedule. Figure P–7 provides a section from the body of an internal proposal.

The *conclusion* of your internal proposal should tie everything together, restate your recommendation, and close with a spirit of coop-

eration (offering to set up a meeting, supply additional information, or provide any other assistance that might be needed). Keep your conclusion brief, as in Figure P–7.

If your proposal cites information that you obtained through research, such as published reports, government statistics, or interviews, follow the conclusion with a list of works cited that provides complete publication information for each source.

External Proposals

External proposals are prepared for clients and customers outside your company. They are either submitted in response to a request for goods and services from another organization (a solicited proposal) or sent to them without a prior request (an unsolicited proposal). See also **grant proposals**.

Solicited Proposals. To find the best method of meeting their needs and the most-qualified company to help reach that goal, procuring organizations commonly issue **requests for proposals** (RFP) or an invitation for bids (IFB) that asks competing companies such as yours to bid for a job.

An RFP often defines a need or problem and allows those who respond to propose possible solutions. The procuring organization generally distributes an RFP to several predetermined vendors. The RFP usually outlines the specific requirements for the ideal solution. For example, if an organization needs a new accounting system, it may require the proposed system to create customized reports. The RFP also may contain specific formatting requirements, such as page length, font type and size, margin widths, **headings**, sections, and appendix items. When responding to RFPs, follow their requirements exactly—proposals that do not provide the required information, do not follow the required format, or miss the submittal deadline are usually considered "noncompliant" and immediately rejected.

In contrast to an RFP, an IFB (invitation for bids) is commonly issued by federal, state, and local government agencies to solicit bids on clearly defined products or services. An IFB is restrictive, binding the bidder to produce an item or a service that meets the exact requirements of the organization issuing the IFB. The goods or services are defined in the IFB by references to performance standards stated in technical specifications. Bidders must be prepared to prove that their product will meet all requirements of the specifications. The procuring organization generally publishes its IFB on its Web site or in a specialized venue, such as Federal Business Opportunities at *www.fbo.gov*. Like RFPs, IFBs usually have specific format requirements; proposals that do not follow the required format can be rejected without review.

Unsolicited Proposals. Unsolicited proposals are those submitted to a company without a prior request for a proposal. Companies often operate for years with a problem they have never recognized (unnecessarily high maintenance costs, for example, or poor inventory-control methods). Many unsolicited proposals are preceded by a letter of inquiry that specifies the problem or unmet need to determine whether there is any potential interest. If you receive a positive response, you would conduct a detailed study of the prospective client's needs to determine whether you can be of help and, if so, exactly how. You would then prepare a formal proposal on the basis of your study.

Sales Proposals. The sales proposal, a major marketing tool for business and industry, is a company's offer to provide specific goods or services to a potential buyer within a specified period of time and for a specified price. The primary purpose of a sales proposal is to demonstrate that the prospective customer's purchase of the seller's products or services will solve a problem, improve operations, or offer other benefits.

Sales proposals vary greatly in length and sophistication. Some are a page or two written by one person; others are many pages written collaboratively by several people; and still others are hundreds of pages written by a proposal-writing team. Many sales proposals note that the offer is valid for a limited period (often 90 days). See also **collaborative writing**.

❖ ETHICS NOTE Once submitted, a sales proposal is a legally binding document that promises to offer goods or services within a specified time and for a specified price. ❖

Simple sales proposals typically follow the introduction-body-conclusion pattern. Long sales proposals must accommodate a greater variety of information and are organized to include some or all of the following sections specified in the RFP:

- Cover, or transmittal, letter
- Title page
- Executive or project summary
- General description of products
- Detailed solution or rationale
- Cost analysis
- Delivery schedule or work plan
- Site-preparation description
- Training requirements
- Statement of responsibilities
- Description of vendor
- Organizational sales pitch (optional)
- Conclusion (optional)
- Appendixes (optional)

A long sales proposal begins with a cover letter that expresses your appreciation for the opportunity to submit your proposal and for any assistance you may have received in studying the customer's requirements.

The letter should acknowledge any previous positive association with the customer. Then it should summarize the recommendations offered in the proposal and express your confidence that they will satisfy the customer's needs. Transmittal letters often list the physical documents attached or enclosed to help readers keep the associated documents together.

A title page and an **executive summary**—sometimes called a *project summary*—follow the cover letter. The title page contains the title of the proposal, the date of submission, the company to which it is being submitted, your company's name, and any symbol or logo that identifies your company. The executive summary is addressed to the decision-maker who will ultimately accept or reject the proposal and should summarize in nontechnical language how you plan to approach the work.

If your proposal offers products as well as services, it should include a general description of the products. In many cases, product descriptions will already exist as company boilerplate; be sure to check your company's files or server for such information before drafting a description from scratch.

❖ ETHICS NOTE In the workplace, employees often borrow material freely from in-house manuals, reports, and other company documents. Using such "boilerplate" is neither **plagiarism** nor a violation of **copyright**. See also **repurposing**. ❖

Following the executive summary and general description of products, explain exactly how you plan to do what you are proposing. This section, called the *detailed solution* or *rationale*, will be read by specialists who can understand and evaluate your plan. It usually begins with a statement of the customer's problem, follows with a statement of the solution, and concludes with a statement of the benefits to the customer. In some proposals, the headings "Problem" and "Solution" are used for this section.

A cost analysis itemizes the estimated cost of all the products and services that you are offering; the delivery schedule—also called a *work plan*—commits you to a specific timetable for providing those products and services.

If your recommendations include modifying your customer's physical facilities by moving walls, adding increased electrical capacity, and the like, include a site-preparation description that details the modifications required. In some proposals, the headings "Facilities" and "Equipment" are used for this section.

If the products and services you are proposing require training the customer's employees, specify the required training and its cost.

To prevent misunderstandings about what your and the customer's responsibilities will be, draw up a statement of responsibilities that explains in detail the tasks solely your responsibility and those solely

the customer's responsibility. Toward the end of the proposal include a description-of-vendor section, which gives a profile of your company, its history, and its present position in the industry. The description-of-vendor section typically includes a list of people or subcontractors and the duties they will perform. The **résumés** of key personnel may also be placed here or in an appendix.

An organizational sales pitch usually follows the description-of-vendor section and is designed to sell the company and its general capability in the field. The sales pitch promotes the company and concludes the proposal on an upbeat note.

Some long sales proposals include a **conclusions** section that summarizes the proposal's salient points, stresses your company's strengths, and includes information about whom the potential client can contact for further information. It may also end with a request for the date the work will begin should the proposal be accepted.

Some proposals include **appendixes** made up of statistical analyses, maps, charts, tables, and résumés of the principal staff assigned to the project. Appendixes to proposals should contain only supplemental information; the primary information should appear in the body of the proposal.

Figure P–8 shows sections from a major sales proposal (shown in full at the following Web link).

WEB LINK	Sample Sales Proposal
For a complete annotated version of Figure P–8, as well as additional sample proposals and the RFP to which Figure P–8 responded, see ***bedfordstmartins.com/alred*** and select *Links for Handbook Entries* or *Model Documents Gallery*.	

The Waters Corporation
17 North Waterloo Blvd.
Tampa, Florida 33607
Phone: (813) 919-1213 Fax: (813) 919-4411
www.waters.com

September 10, 2012

Mr. John Yeung, General Manager
Cookson's Retail Stores, Inc.
101 Longuer Street
Savannah, Georgia 31499

Dear Mr. Yeung:

The Waters Corporation appreciates the opportunity to respond to Cookson's Request for Proposals dated July 20, 2012. We would like to thank Mr. Becklight, Director of your Management Information Systems Department, for his invaluable contributions to the study of your operations that we conducted before preparing our proposal.

It has been Waters's privilege to provide Cookson's with retail systems and equipment since your first store opened many years ago. Therefore, we have become very familiar with your requirements as they have evolved during the expansion you have experienced since that time. Waters's close working relationship with Cookson's has resulted in a clear understanding of Cookson's philosophy and needs.

Our proposal describes a Waters Interactive Terminal / Retail Processor System designed to meet Cookson's network and processing needs. It will provide all of your required capabilities, from the point-of-sale operational requirements at the store terminals to the host processor. The system uses the proven Retail III modular software, with its point-of-sale applications, and the superior Interactive Terminal, with its advanced capabilities and design. This system is easily installed without extensive customer reprogramming.

FIGURE P–8. Sales Proposal (Cover Letter)

Mr. J. Yeung
Page 2
September 10, 2012

The Waters Interactive Terminal / Retail Processor System, which is compatible with much of Cookson's present equipment, not only will meet your present requirements but will provide the flexibility to add new features and products in the future. The system's unique hardware modularity, efficient microprocessor design, and flexible programming capability greatly reduce the risk of obsolescence.

Thank you for the opportunity to present this proposal. You may be sure that we will use all the resources available to the Waters Corporation to ensure the successful implementation of the new system.

Sincerely yours,

Janet A. Curtain

Janet A. Curtain
Executive Account Manager
General Merchandise Systems
(jcurtain@waters.com)

Enclosure: Proposal

FIGURE P–8. Sales Proposal (*continued*) (Cover Letter)

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Waters 319 Interactive Terminal / 615 Retail Processor System will provide your management with the tools necessary to manage people and equipment more profitably with procedures that will yield more cost-effective business controls for Cookson's.

The equipment and applications proposed for Cookson's were selected through the combined effort of Waters and Cookson's Management Information Systems Director, Mr. Becklight. The architecture of the system will respond to your current requirements and allow for future expansion.

The features and hardware in the system were determined from data acquired through the comprehensive survey we conducted at your stores in July of this year. The total of 71 Interactive Terminals proposed to service your four store locations is based on the number of terminals currently in use and on the average number of transactions processed during normal and peak periods. The planned remodeling of all four stores was also considered, and the suggested terminal placement has been incorporated into the working floor plan. The proposed equipment configuration and software applications have been simulated to determine system performance based on the volumes and anticipated growth rates of the Cookson's stores.

The information from the survey was also used in the cost justification, which was checked and verified by your controller, Mr. Deitering. The cost-effectiveness of the Waters Interactive Terminal / Retail Processor System is apparent. Expected savings, such as the projected 46 percent reduction in sales audit expenses, are realistic projections based on Waters's experience with other installations of this type.

Waters has a proven track record of success in the manufacture, installation, and servicing of retail business information systems stretching over decades. We believe that the system we propose will extend and strengthen our successful and long-term partnership with Cookson's.

FIGURE P–8. Sales Proposal (*continued*) (Executive Summary)

GENERAL SYSTEM DESCRIPTION

The point-of-sale system that Waters is proposing for Cookson's includes two primary Waters products. These are the 319 Interactive Terminal and the 615 Retail Processor.

Waters 319 Interactive Terminal
The primary component in the proposed retail system is the Interactive Terminal. It contains a full microprocessor, which gives it the flexibility that Cookson's has been looking for.

The 319 Interactive Terminal provides you with freedom in sequencing a transaction. You are not limited to a preset list of available steps or transactions. The terminal program can be adapted to provide unique transaction sets, each designed with a logical sequence of entry and processing to accomplish required tasks. In addition to sales transactions recorded on the selling floor, specialized transactions such as theater-ticket sales and payments can be designed for your customer-service area.

The 319 Interactive Terminal also functions as a credit authorization device, either by using its own floor limits or by transmitting a credit inquiry to the 615 Retail Processor for authorization.

Data-collection formats have been simplified so that transaction editing and formatting are much more easily accomplished. The IS manager has already been provided with documentation on these formats and has outlined all data-processing efforts that will be necessary to transmit the data to your current systems. These projections have been considered in the cost justification.

Waters 615 Retail Processor
The Waters 615 Retail Processor is a minicomputer system designed to support the Waters family of retail terminals. The . . .

[*The proposal next describes the Waters 615 Retail Processor before moving on to the detailed-solution section.*]

FIGURE P–8. Sales Proposal (*continued*) (General Description of Products)

PAYROLL APPLICATION

Current Procedure
Your current system of reporting time requires each hourly employee to sign a time sheet; the time sheet is reviewed by the department manager and sent to the Payroll Department on Friday evening. Because the week ends on Saturday, the employee must show the scheduled hours for Saturday and not the actual hours; therefore, the department manager must adjust the reported hours on the time sheet for employees who do not report on the scheduled Saturday or who do not work the number of hours scheduled.

The Payroll Department employs a supervisor and three full-time clerks. To meet deadlines caused by an unbalanced workflow, an additional part-time clerk is used for 20 to 30 hours per week. The average wage for this clerk is $13.00 per hour.

Advantage of Waters's System
The 319 Interactive Terminal can be programmed for entry of payroll data for each employee on Monday morning by department managers, with the data reflecting actual hours worked. This system would eliminate the need for manual batching, controlling, and data input. The Payroll Department estimates conservatively that this work consumes 40 hours per week.

Hours per week	40
Average wage (part-time clerk)	13.00
Weekly payroll cost	$520.00
Annual savings	$27,040

Elimination of the manual tasks of tabulating, batching, and controlling can save 0.25 hourly unit. Improved workflow resulting from timely data in the system without data-input processing will allow more efficient use of clerical hours. This would reduce payroll by the 0.50 hourly unit currently required to meet weekly check disbursement.

Eliminate manual tasks	0.25
Improve workflow	0.75
40-hour unit reduction	1.00
Hours per week	40
Average wage (full-time clerk)	15.00
Savings per week	$600.00
Annual savings	$31,200

TOTAL SAVINGS: $58,240

FIGURE P–8. Sales Proposal (*continued*) (Detailed Solution)

COST ANALYSIS

This section of our proposal provides detailed cost information for the Waters 319 Interactive Terminal and the Waters 615 Retail Processor. It then multiplies these major elements by the quantities required at each of your four locations.

319 Interactive Terminal

Equipment	Price	Maint. (1 yr.)
Terminal	$2,895	$167
Journal Printer	425	38
Receipt Printer	425	38
Forms Printer	525	38
Software	220	—
TOTALS	$4,490	$281

[*The cost section goes on to describe other costs to install the system before summarizing the costs.*]

The following table summarizes all costs.

Location	Hardware	Maint. (1 yr.)	Software
Store No. 1	$72,190	$4,975	$3,520
Store No. 2	89,190	6,099	4,400
Store No. 3	76,380	5,256	3,740
Store No. 4	80,650	5,537	3,960
Data Center	63,360	6,679	12,480
Subtotals	$381,770	$28,546	$28,100

TOTAL $438,416

DELIVERY SCHEDULE

Waters is normally able to deliver 319 Interactive Terminals and 615 Retail Processors within 30 days of the date of the contract. This can vary depending on the rate and size of incoming orders.

All the software recommended in this proposal is available for immediate delivery. We do not anticipate any difficulty in meeting your tentative delivery schedule.

FIGURE P–8. Sales Proposal (*continued*) (Cost Analysis and Delivery Schedule)

SITE PREPARATION

Waters will work closely with Cookson's to ensure that each site is properly prepared prior to system installation. You will receive a copy of Waters's installation and wiring procedures manual, which lists the physical dimensions, service clearance, and weight of the system components in addition to the power, logic, communications-cable, and environmental requirements. Cookson's is responsible for all building alterations and electrical facility changes, including the purchase and installation of communications cables, connecting blocks, and receptacles.

Wiring

For the purpose of future site considerations, Waters's in-house wiring specifications for the system call for two twisted-pair wires and twenty-two shielded gauges. The length of communications wires must not exceed 2,500 feet.

As a guide for the power supply, we suggest that Cookson's consider the following:

1. The branch circuit (limited to 20 amps) should service no equipment other than 319 Interactive Terminals.
2. Each 20-amp branch circuit should support a maximum of three Interactive Terminals.
3. Each branch circuit must have three equal-size conductors — one hot leg, one neutral, and one insulated isolated ground.
4. Hubbell IG 5362 duplex outlets or the equivalent should be used to supply power to each terminal.
5. Server-room wiring will have to be upgraded to support the 615 Retail Processor.

FIGURE P–8. Sales Proposal (*continued*) (Site Preparation Section)

TRAINING

To ensure a successful installation, Waters offers the following training course for your operators.

Interactive Terminal / Retail Processor Operations
Course number: 8256
Length: three days
Tuition: $500.00

This course provides the student with the skills, knowledge, and practice required to operate an Interactive Terminal / Retail Processor System. Online, clustered, and stand-alone environments are covered.

We recommend that students have a department-store background and that they have some knowledge of the system configuration with which they will be working.

FIGURE P–8. Sales Proposal (*continued*) (Training Section)

RESPONSIBILITIES

On the basis of its years of experience in installing information-processing systems, Waters believes that a successful installation requires a clear understanding of certain responsibilities.

Waters's Responsibilities
Generally, it is Waters's responsibility to provide its users with needed assistance during the installation so that live processing can begin as soon thereafter as is practical. The following items describe our specific responsibilities:

- Provide operations documentation for each application that you acquire from Waters.
- Provide forms and other supplies as ordered.
- Provide specifications and technical guidance for proper site planning and installation.
- Provide adviser assistance in the conversion from your present system to the new system.

Cookson's Responsibilities
Cookson's will be responsible for the suggested improvements described earlier, as well as the following:

- Identify an installation coordinator and system operator.
- Provide supervisors and clerical personnel to perform conversion to the system.
- Establish reasonable time schedules for implementation.
- Ensure that the physical site requirements are met.
- Provide personnel to be trained as operators and ensure that other employees are trained as necessary.
- Assume the responsibility for implementing and operating the system.

FIGURE P–8. Sales Proposal (*continued*) (Statement of Responsibilities)

DESCRIPTION OF VENDOR

The Waters Corporation develops, manufactures, markets, installs, and services total business information-processing systems for selected markets. These markets are primarily in the retail, financial, commercial, industrial, health-care, education, and government sectors.

The Waters total-system concept encompasses one of the broadest hardware and software product lines in the industry. Waters computers range from small business systems to powerful general-purpose processors. Waters computers are supported by a complete spectrum of terminals, peripherals, and data-communication networks, as well as an extensive library of software products. Supplemental services and products include data centers, field service, systems engineering, and educational centers.

The Waters Corporation was founded in 1934 and presently has approximately 26,500 employees. The Waters headquarters is located at 17 North Waterloo Boulevard, Tampa, Florida, with district offices throughout the United States and Canada.

WHY WATERS?

Strong Commitment to the Retail Industry
Waters's commitment to the retail industry is stronger than ever. We are continually striving to provide leadership in the design and implementation of new retail systems and applications that will ensure our users of a logical growth pattern.

Dynamic Research and Development
Over the years, Waters has spent increasingly large sums on research-and-development efforts to ensure the availability of products and systems for the future. In 2011, our research-and-development expenditure for advanced systems design and technological innovations reached the $70-million level.

Leading Point-of-Sale Vendor
Waters is a leading point-of-sale vendor, having installed over 150,000 units. The knowledge and experience that Waters has gained over the years from these installations ensure well-coordinated and effective systems implementations.

FIGURE P–8. Sales Proposal (*continued*) (Vendor Description and Organizational Sales Pitch)

CONCLUSION

The Waters Corporation welcomes the opportunity to submit this proposal to Cookson's. Waters is confident that we have offered the right solution at a competitive price. Based on the hands-on analysis we conducted, our proposal takes into account your current and projected workloads and your plans to expand your facilities and operations. Our proposal will also, we believe, enable Cookson's to minimize future employee costs and to enhance its accounting features.

Waters has a proven track record of success in the manufacture, installation, and servicing of retail business information systems stretching over many decades. We also have a demonstrated record of success in our past business associations with Cookson's. We believe that the system we propose will extend and strengthen this partnership.

Should you require additional information about any facet of this proposal, please contact Janet A. Curtain, who will meet with you or arrange for Waters's technical staff to meet with you or send you the information you need.

We look forward to your decision and to continued success in our working relationship with Cookson's.

FIGURE P–8. Sales Proposal (*continued*) (Conclusion)

pseudo- / quasi-

As a **prefix**, *pseudo-*, meaning "false or counterfeit," is joined to the root word without a **hyphen** unless the root word begins with a capital letter (*pseudo*science, *pseudo*-Newtonian). *Pseudo-* is sometimes confused with *quasi-*, meaning "somewhat" or "partial." Unlike *semi-*, *quasi-* means "resembling something" rather than "half." *Quasi-* is usually hyphenated in combinations (*quasi*-scientific theories). See also **bi- / semi-**.

punctuation

Punctuation helps **readers** understand the meaning and relationships of words, phrases, clauses, and sentences. Marks of punctuation link, separate, enclose, indicate omissions, terminate, and classify. Most punctuation marks can perform more than one function. See also **sentence construction**.

The use of punctuation is determined by grammatical conventions and the writer's intention. Understanding punctuation is essential for writers because it enables them to communicate with **clarity** and precision. See also **grammar**.

Detailed information on each mark of punctuation is given in its own entry. The following are the 13 marks of punctuation.

apostrophe	'	parentheses	( )
brackets	[ ]	period	.
colon	:	question mark	?
comma	,	quotation marks	" "
dash	—	semicolon	;
exclamation mark	!	slash	/
hyphen	-		

See also **abbreviations**, **capitalization**, **contractions**, **dates**, **ellipses**, **italics**, and **numbers**.

WEB LINK	Practicing Punctuation
For online exercises on punctuation, see ***bedfordstmartins.com/alred*** and select *Exercise Central*.	

purpose

What do you want your **readers** to know, to believe, or to do when they have read your document? When you answer that question about your **audience**, you have determined the primary purpose, or objective, of your document. Be careful not to state a purpose too broadly. A statement of purpose such as "to explain continuing-education standards" is too general to be helpful during the writing process. In contrast, "to explain to members of the American Association of Critical-Care Nurses how to determine if a continuing-education course meets the association's professional standards" is a specific purpose that will help you focus on what you need your document to accomplish. Often the **context** will help you focus your purpose.

The writer's primary purpose is often more complex than simply "to explain" something, as shown in the previous paragraph. To fully understand this complexity, you need to ask yourself not only *why* you are writing the document but *what* you want to influence your reader to believe or to do after reading it. Suppose a writer for a **newsletter** has been assigned to write an article about cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR). In answer to the question *what?* the writer could state the purpose as "to emphasize the importance of CPR." To the question *why?* the writer might respond, "to encourage employees to sign up for evening CPR classes." Putting the answers to the two questions together, the writer's purpose might be stated as, "To write a document that will emphasize the importance of CPR and encourage employees to sign up for evening CPR classes." Note that the primary purpose of this document is to persuade the readers of the importance of CPR, and the secondary goal is to motivate them to register for a class. Secondary goals often involve such abstract notions as to motivate, to persuade, to reassure, or to inspire your reader. See also **persuasion**.

If you answer the questions *what?* and *why?* and put the answers into writing as a stated purpose that includes both primary and secondary goals, you will simplify your writing task and more likely achieve your purpose. For a **collaborative writing** project, it is especially important to collectively write a statement of your purpose to ensure that the document achieves its goals. Do not lose sight of that purpose as you become engrossed in the other steps of the writing process. See also "Five Steps to Successful Writing" on page xv.

Q

question marks

The question mark (?) most often ends a sentence that is a direct question or request.

- Where did you put the specifications? [direct question]
- Will you e-mail me if your shipment does not arrive by June 10? [request]

Use a question mark to end a statement that has an interrogative meaning—a statement that is declarative in form but asks a question.

- The lab report is finished? [question in declarative form]

Question marks may follow a series of separate items within an interrogative sentence.

- Do you remember the date of the contract? Its terms? Whether you signed it?

Use a question mark to end an interrogative clause within a declarative sentence.

- It was not until July (or was it August?) that we submitted the report.

Retain the question mark in a title that is being cited, even though the sentence in which it appears has not ended.

- *Can Quality Be Controlled?* is the title of her book.

Never use a question mark to end a sentence that is an indirect question.

- He asked me where I put the specifications?

When a question is a polite request or an instruction to which an affirmative response is assumed, a question mark is not necessary.

- Will you call me as soon as he arrives. [polite request]

When used with **quotations**, the placement of the question mark is important. When the writer is asking a question, the question mark belongs outside the quotation marks.

- Did she actually say, "I don't think the project should continue"?

If the quotation itself is a question, the question mark goes inside the **quotation marks**.

- She asked, "Do we have enough funding?"

If both cases apply—the writer is asking a question and the quotation itself is a question—use a single question mark inside the quotation marks.

- Did she ask, "Do we have enough funding?"

questionnaires

A questionnaire—a series of questions on a particular topic sent to a number of people—serves the same function as an interview but does so on paper, as an **e-mail** attachment, or as an online form. As you prepare a questionnaire, therefore, keep in mind your **purpose** and your intended **audience**. See also **interviewing for information** and **research**.

Questionnaires have several advantages over the personal interview as well as several disadvantages.

ADVANTAGES

- A questionnaire allows you to gather information from more people than you could by conducting personal interviews.
- A questionnaire enables you to obtain responses from people who are difficult to reach or who are in various geographic locations.
- When responding to a questionnaire, people have more time to think through their answers than when faced with the pressure of composing thoughtful and complete answers to an interviewer in person.
- The questionnaire may yield more objective data than an interview because it reduces the possibility that the interviewer's tone of voice, facial expressions, or mere presence might influence an answer.
- The cost of distributing and tabulating a questionnaire is lower than the cost of conducting numerous personal interviews.

DISADVANTAGES

- The results of a questionnaire may be slanted in favor of those people who have strong opinions on a subject because they are more likely to respond than those with only moderate views.
- The questionnaire does not allow specific follow-up questions to answers; at best, it can be designed to let one question lead logically to another.
- Distributing questionnaires and waiting for replies may take considerably longer than conducting personal interviews.

The sample cover memo and questionnaire in Figure Q–1 were sent to employees in a large organization who had participated in a six-month program of flexible working hours.

Selecting the Recipients

Selecting the proper recipients for your questionnaire is crucial if you are to gather representative and usable data. If you wanted to survey the opinions of large groups in the general population—for example, all medical technologists working in private laboratories or all independent garage owners—your task would not be easy. Because you cannot include everybody in your survey, you need to choose a representative cross section. Depending on the topic, you may need to include people from different geographic areas, members of both genders, and people with different educational backgrounds. Only by using a representative sample of your target population can you make a generalized statement based on your findings from the sample. (The best sources of information on sampling techniques are market-research and statistics texts.)

WEB LINK	Online Surveys
Surveymonkey.com offers help for designing online surveys as well as collecting and analyzing the results. For links to this site and more, see *bedfordstmartins.com/alred* and select *Links for Handbook Entries*.	

Preparing the Questions

A key goal in designing the questionnaire is to keep it as brief as possible. The longer a questionnaire is, the less likely the recipient will be to complete and return it. Also, the questions should be easy to understand. A confusing question will yield confusing results, whereas a carefully worded question will be easy to answer. Ideally, recipients should be able to answer most questions with a "yes" or "no" or by checking or circling a choice among several options. Such answers are easy

Luxwear Products Corporation
MEMO

To: All Company Employees

From: Nelson Barrett, Director *NB*
Human Resources Department

Date: October 19, 2012

Subject: Review of Flexible Working Hours Program

Please complete and return the questionnaire enclosed regarding Luxwear's trial program of flexible working hours. Your answers will help us decide whether we should make the program permanent.

Return the completed questionnaire to Ken Rose, Mail Code 12B, by October 29. Your signature on the questionnaire is not necessary. All responses will be confidential and given serious consideration. Feel free to raise additional issues pertaining to the program.

If you want to discuss any item in the questionnaire, call Pam Peters in the Human Resources Department at extension 8812 or e-mail her at pp1@lpc.com.

Enclosure: Questionnaire

FIGURE Q–1. Questionnaire (*continued*) (Printed Cover Memo)

Flexible Working Hours Program
Questionnaire

1. What is your job category?

   ☐ Supervisory
   ☐ Nonsupervisory

2. Indicate to the nearest quarter of an hour your starting time under flextime.

   ☐ 7:00 a.m.
   ☐ 7:15 a.m.
   ☐ 7:30 a.m.
   ☐ 7:45 a.m.
   ☐ 8:00 a.m.
   ☐ 8:15 a.m.
   ☐ 8:30 a.m.
   ☐ 8:45 a.m.
   ☐ 9:00 a.m.
   ☐ Other (specify) _____

3. Where do you live?

   ☐ Talbot County
   ☐ Montgomery County
   ☐ Greene County
   ☐ Other (specify) _____

4. How do you usually travel to work?

   ☐ Drive alone
   ☐ Bus
   ☐ Train
   ☐ Bicycle
   ☐ Walk
   ☐ Car pool
   ☐ Motorcycle
   ☐ Other (specify) _____

5. Has flextime affected your commuting time?

   ☐ Increase: Approximate number of minutes _____
   ☐ Decrease: Approximate number of minutes _____
   ☐ No change

6. If you drive alone or in a car pool, has flextime increased or decreased the amount of time it takes you to find a parking space?

   ☐ Increased ☐ Decreased ☐ No change

7. Has flextime had an effect on your productivity?

   a. Quality of work
      ☐ Increased ☐ Decreased ☐ No change

   b. Accuracy of work
      ☐ Increased ☐ Decreased ☐ No change

   c. Quiet time for uninterrupted work
      ☐ Increased ☐ Decreased ☐ No change

FIGURE Q–1. Questionnaire (*continued*)

8. Have you had difficulty getting in touch with coworkers who are on different work schedules from yours?

   ☐ Yes ☐ No

9. Have you had trouble scheduling meetings within flexible starting and quitting times?

   ☐ Yes ☐ No

10. Has flextime affected the way you feel about your job?

    ☐ Yes ☐ No

    If yes, please answer (a) or (b):

    a. Feel better about job
       ☐ Slightly ☐ Considerably

    b. Feel worse about job
       ☐ Slightly ☐ Considerably

11. How important is it for you to have flexibility in your working hours?

    ☐ Very ☐ Somewhat ☐ Not at all

12. Has flextime allowed you more time to be with your family?

    ☐ Yes ☐ No

13. If you are responsible for the care of a young child or children, has flextime made it easier or more difficult for you to obtain babysitting or day-care services?

    ☐ Easier ☐ More difficult ☐ No change

14. Do you recommend that the flextime program be made permanent?

    ☐ Yes ☐ No

15. Please describe below or on an attached sheet any major changes you recommend for the program.

Thank you for your assistance.

FIGURE Q–1. Questionnaire (*continued*)

to tabulate and require minimum effort on the part of the respondent, thus increasing your chances of obtaining a response. See also **forms**.

- Do you recommend that the flextime program be made permanent?

  ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ No opinion

If you need more information than such questions produce, provide an appropriate range of answers, as in the following example:

- How many hours of overtime would you be willing to work each week?

  ☐ 4 hours ☐ 8 hours ☐ More than 10 hours

  ☐ 6 hours ☐ 10 hours ☐ No overtime

❖ ETHICS NOTE Questions should be neutral; they should not be worded in such a way as to lead respondents to give a particular answer, which can result in inaccurate or skewed data.

SLANTED Would you prefer the freedom of a four-day workweek?

NEUTRAL Would you choose to work a four-day workweek, ten hours a day, with every Friday off? ❖

WRITER'S CHECKLIST **Designing a Questionnaire**

- ✔ Prepare a **cover letter** (or a memo or an e-mail) explaining who you are, the questionnaire's purpose, the date by which you need a response, and how and where to send the completed questionnaire.
- ✔ Include a stamped, self-addressed envelope if you are using regular mail.
- ✔ Construct as many questions as possible for which the recipient does not have to compose an answer.
- ✔ Include a section on the questionnaire for additional comments where the recipient may clarify his or her overall attitude toward the subject.
- ✔ Include questions about the respondent's age, gender, education, occupation, and so on, only if such information will be of value in interpreting the answers.
- ✔ State whether the information provided as well as the recipient's identity will be kept confidential.
- ✔ Include your contact information (mailing address, phone number, and e-mail address) and be sure to thank respondents for participating.

WRITER'S CHECKLIST **Designing a Questionnaire** (*continued*)

- ✔ Consider offering some tangible appreciation to those who answer the questionnaire by a specific date, such as a copy of the results or, for a customer questionnaire, a credit toward a future purchase.

quid pro quo

Quid pro quo, which is Latin for "one thing for another," suggests mutual cooperation or "tit for tat" in a relationship between two groups or individuals. The term may be appropriate to business and legal contexts if you are sure your **readers** understand its meaning. ("Before approving the plan, we insisted on a fair *quid pro quo*.") See also **foreign words in English**.

quotation marks

Quotation marks (" ") are used to enclose a direct quotation of spoken or written words. Quotation marks have other special uses, but they should not be used for **emphasis**.

Direct Quotations

Enclose in quotation marks anything that is quoted word for word (a direct quotation) from speech or written material.

- ▸ She said clearly, "I want the progress report by three o'clock."

Do not enclose indirect quotations—usually introduced by the word *that*—in quotation marks. Indirect quotations are paraphrases of a writer's or speaker's words or ideas. See also **paraphrasing**.

- ▸ She said that she wanted the progress report by three o'clock.

❖ ETHICS NOTE When you use quotation marks to indicate that you are quoting, do not make any changes or omissions inside the quoted material unless you clearly indicate what you have done. For further information on incorporating quoted material and inserting comments, see **plagiarism** and **quotations**. ❖

Use single quotation marks (' ') to enclose a quotation that appears within a quotation.

- John said, "Jane told me that she was going to 'stay with the project if it takes all year.'"

Words and Phrases

Use quotation marks to set off special words or terms only to point out that the term is used in context for a unique or special purpose (that is, in the sense of the term *so-called*).

- A remarkable chain of events caused the sinking of the "unsinkable" *Titanic* on its maiden voyage.

Slang, colloquial expressions, and attempts at humor, although infrequent in workplace writing, should seldom be set off by quotation marks.

- Our first six months amounted to a ~~"shakedown cruise."~~ shakedown cruise.

Titles of Works

Use quotation marks to enclose **titles** of reports, short stories, articles, essays, single episodes of radio and television programs, and short musical works (including songs). However, do not use quotation marks for titles of books and periodicals, which should appear in **italics**.

- His report, "Effects of Government Regulations on Motorcycle Safety," cited the article "No-Fault Insurance and Motorcycles," published in *American Motorcyclist* magazine.

Use quotation marks for parts of publications, such as chapters of books and articles or sections within periodicals.

- "Bad Writing," an article by Barbara Wallraff, appeared in the "On Language" column of the *New York Times*.

Some titles, by convention, are not set off by quotation marks, underlining, or italics, although they are capitalized.

- Professional Writing [college course title], the Bible, the Constitution, Lincoln's Gettysburg Address, the Lands' End Catalog

Punctuation

Commas and **periods** always go inside closing quotation marks.

- "Reading *Computer World* gives me the insider's view," he says, adding, "It's like a conversation with the top experts."

Semicolons and **colons** always go outside closing quotation marks.

- He said, "I will pay the full amount"; this statement surprised us.

All other punctuation follows the logic of the context: If the punctuation is part of the material quoted, it goes inside the quotation marks; if the punctuation is not part of the material quoted, it goes outside the quotation marks.

quotations

Using direct and indirect quotations is an effective way to make or support a point. However, avoid the temptation to overquote during the **note-taking** phase of your **research**; concentrate on summarizing what you read.

❖ ETHICS NOTE When you use a quotation (or an idea of another writer), cite your source properly. If you do not, you will be guilty of **plagiarism**. For specific details on citation systems, see **documenting sources**. ❖

Direct Quotations

A direct quotation is a word-for-word copy of the text of an original source. Choose direct quotations (which can be of a word, a phrase, a sentence, or, occasionally, a paragraph) carefully and use them sparingly. Enclose direct quotations in **quotation marks** and separate them from the rest of the sentence by a **comma** or **colon**. Use the initial capital letter of a quotation if the quoted material originally began with a capital letter.

- The Dean of the Medical College stated, "We must attract more students to careers in geriatric medicine in order to meet the health-care needs of older Americans."

When dividing a quotation, set off the material that interrupts the quotation with commas, and use quotation marks around each part of the quotation.

- "We must attract more students to careers in geriatric medicine," he said in a recent interview, "in order to meet the health-care needs of older Americans."

Indirect Quotations

An indirect quotation is a paraphrased version of an original text. It is usually introduced by the word *that* and is not set off from the rest of the sentence by punctuation marks. See also **paraphrasing**.

- In an interview, he said *that* recruiting medical students to geriatrics is essential to meeting the health-care demands of older Americans.

Deletions or Omissions

Deletions or omissions from quoted material are indicated by three **ellipsis** points (. . .) within a sentence and a period plus three ellipsis points (. . . .) at the end of a sentence.

ORIGINAL "Their touchstones, which to an outsider might appear as arbitrary and simplistic, were developed through highly specific research using both internal and outside expertise, distilled from a complex historical process of examining rhetorical variables, and documented as operational guidelines rather than narratives of processes or of theoretical models."

WITH ELLIPSES "Their touchstones . . . were developed through highly specific research using both internal and outside expertise, distilled from a complex historical process of examining rhetorical variables, and documented as operational guidelines. . . ."

When a quoted passage begins in the middle of a sentence rather than at the beginning, ellipsis points are not necessary; the fact that the first letter of the quoted material is not capitalized tells the reader that the quotation begins in midsentence.

- Rivero goes on to conclude that "the Research and Development Center is essential to keeping high-tech companies in the state."

Inserting Material into Quotations

When it is necessary to insert a clarifying comment within quoted material, use **brackets**.

- "The industry is an integrated system that serves an extensive [geographic] area, with divisions existing as islands within the larger system's sphere of influence."

When quoted material contains an obvious error or might be questioned in some other way, insert the expression *sic* (Latin for "thus") in italic type and enclose it in brackets ([*sic*]) following the questionable material to indicate that the writer has quoted the material *exactly as it appeared in the original*.

- The company considers the Baker Foundation to be a "guilt-edged [*sic*] investment."

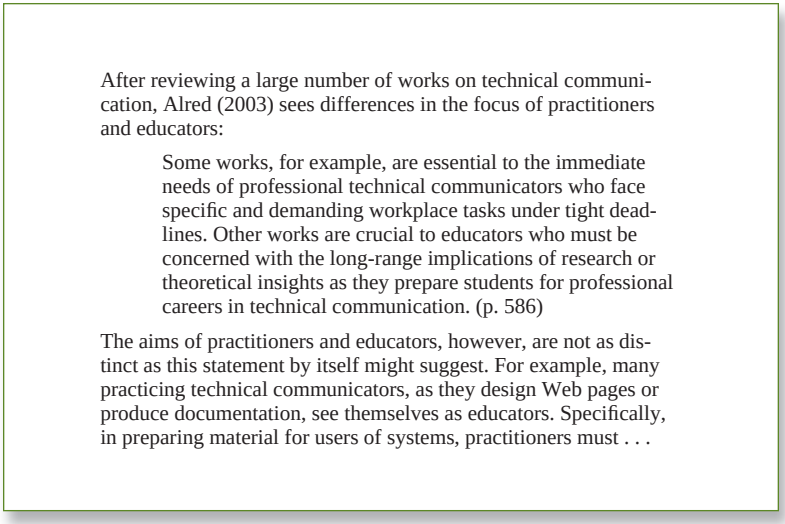
Incorporating Quotations into Text

Quote word for word only when a source with particular expertise states something that is especially precise, striking, or noteworthy, or that may reinforce a point you are making. Quotations must also logically, grammatically, and syntactically match the rest of the sentence and surrounding text. Notice in Figure Q–2 that the quotation blends with the content of the surrounding text, which uses **transition** to introduce and comment on the quotation.

Depending on the citation system, the style of incorporating quotations varies. For examples of three different styles, see **documenting sources**. Figure Q–2 shows APA style for a long quotation. At the end of the document, the following entry would appear in the APA-style list of references as the source of the quotation in Figure Q–2.

- Alred, G. J. (2003). Essential works on technical communication. *Technical Communication, 50,* 585–616.

Do not rely too heavily on the use of quotations in the final version of your document. Generally, avoid quoting anything that is longer than one paragraph.


After reviewing a large number of works on technical communication, Alred (2003) sees differences in the focus of practitioners and educators:

> Some works, for example, are essential to the immediate needs of professional technical communicators who face specific and demanding workplace tasks under tight deadlines. Other works are crucial to educators who must be concerned with the long-range implications of research or theoretical insights as they prepare students for professional careers in technical communication. (p. 586)

The aims of practitioners and educators, however, are not as distinct as this statement by itself might suggest. For example, many practicing technical communicators, as they design Web pages or produce documentation, see themselves as educators. Specifically, in preparing material for users of systems, practitioners must . . .

FIGURE Q–2. Long Quotation (APA Style)

R

raise / rise

Both *raise* and *rise* mean "move to a higher position." However, *raise* is a transitive **verb** and always takes an **object** ("*raise* crops"), whereas *rise* is an intransitive verb and never takes an object ("heat *rises*").

readers

The first rule of effective writing is to *help your readers*. If you overlook this commitment, your writing will not achieve its **purpose**, either for you or for your business or organization. For meeting the needs of both individual and multiple readers, see **audience**.

really

Really is an **adverb** meaning "actually" or "in fact." Although both *really* and *actually* are often used as **intensifiers** for **emphasis** or sarcasm in speech, avoid such use in formal and professional writing.

- Did he ~~really~~ finish the report on time?

reason is [because]

Replace the redundant phrase *the reason is because* with *the reason is that* or simply *because*. See also **conciseness**.

reference letters

Writing a reference letter (or letter of recommendation) can range from completing an admission form for a prospective student to composing a detailed description of professional accomplishments and personal

CITY OF SPRINGFIELD
LEGISLATIVE REFERENCE BUREAU
200 EAST MAIN STREET
SPRINGFIELD, AK 99501
(414) 224-5555

January 12, 2012

Mr. Phillip Lester
Human Resources Director
Thompson Enterprises
201 State Street
St. Louis, MO 63102

Dear Mr. Lester:

How long writer has known applicant and the circumstances

As Kerry Hawkin's former employer, I am happy to have the opportunity to recommend her. I've known Kerry for five years, first as an intern in our office and for two years as a full-time research associate. This past year she has remained in contact as she completed graduate school.

Outstanding characteristics of applicant

Our office is the official research arm for the Springfield City Council, so we approved Kerry as an intern not only because of her outstanding grades but also because the university internship coordinator reported that she possessed excellent research skills. Kerry proved her worth in our office as an intern and was offered a full-time position as a research associate to work on projects under my supervision. I found Kerry not only to be a careful researcher but also to be capable of completing her assignments on schedule within tight deadlines. The material provided in her well-written reports unfailingly met the requirements for my work and more. During her time in our office, Kerry also proved herself to be a most valued colleague.

Recommendation and summary of qualifications

I strongly recommend Kerry for her ability to work independently, to organize her time efficiently, and to write clearly and articulately. I regret that we have no position to offer her at this time. Please do not hesitate to let me know if I can provide further information.

Sincerely yours,

Michelle Paul

Michelle Paul, Manager
mpaul@springfield.ak.gov

FIGURE R–1. Reference Letter (Printed on Letterhead Stationery)

characteristics for someone seeking employment. In Figure R–1 on page 469, a former employer has written a letter for someone who is seeking an advanced position as a researcher.

To write an effective letter of recommendation, you must be familiar enough with the applicant's abilities and performance to offer an evaluation. Keep in mind the following:

- Identify yourself by name, title or position, employer, and address.
- Respond directly to the inquiry, carefully addressing the specific questions asked.
- Describe specifically the applicant's skills, abilities, knowledge, and character, guided by the person's **résumé** when possible.
- Communicate truthfully and without embellishment.

You could begin, as in Figure R–1, by stating the circumstances of your acquaintance and how long you have known the person for whom you are writing the letter. Mention, with as much evidence as possible, one or two outstanding characteristics of the applicant. Organize the details in your letter using the decreasing **order-of-importance method of development**. Conclude with a brief summary of the applicant's qualifications and a clear statement of recommendation. See **correspondence** for letter format and general advice.

❖ ETHICS NOTE When you are asked to serve as a reference or to supply a letter of reference, be aware that applicants have a legal right to examine what you have written about them, unless they sign a waiver. ❖

refusal letters

R

A refusal delivers a negative message (or bad news) in the form of a **letter**, a **memo**, or an **e-mail**. The ideal refusal says "no" in such a way that you not only avoid antagonizing your reader but also maintain goodwill. See also **audience**.

When the stakes are high, you must convince your reader *before* you present the bad news that your reasons for refusing are logical or understandable. (See also **correspondence**.) Stating a negative message in your opening may cause your reader to react too quickly and dismiss your explanation. The following pattern, used in the message shown in Figure R–2, is an effective way to handle this problem:

1. Open with **context** for the message (often called a "buffer").
2. Review the facts or details leading to the refusal or bad news.

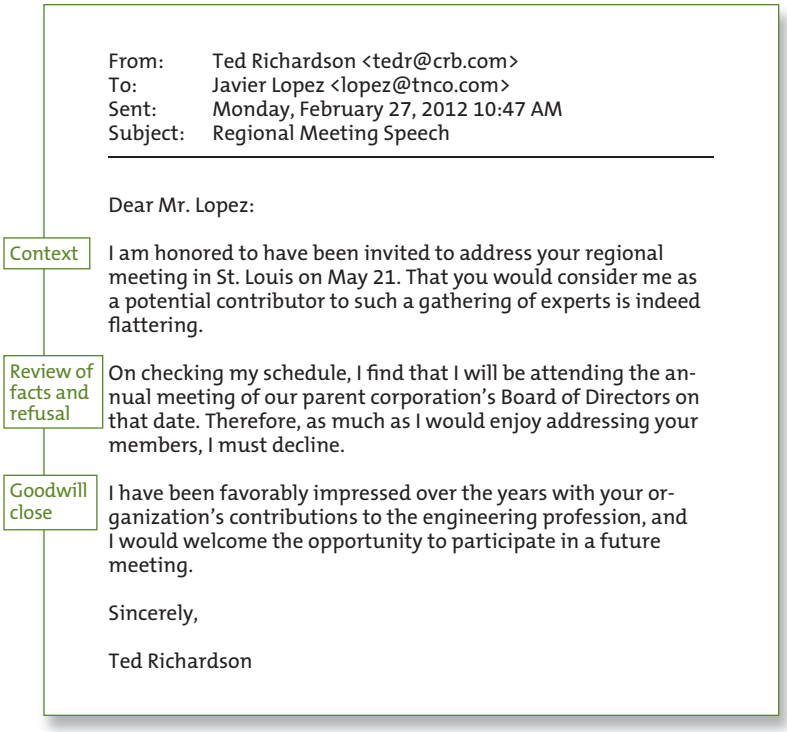

From: Ted Richardson <tedr@crb.com>
To: Javier Lopez <lopez@tnco.com>
Sent: Monday, February 27, 2012 10:47 AM
Subject: Regional Meeting Speech
Dear Mr. Lopez:
Context
I am honored to have been invited to address your regional meeting in St. Louis on May 21. That you would consider me as a potential contributor to such a gathering of experts is indeed flattering.
Review of facts and refusal
On checking my schedule, I find that I will be attending the annual meeting of our parent corporation's Board of Directors on that date. Therefore, as much as I would enjoy addressing your members, I must decline.
Goodwill close
I have been favorably impressed over the years with your organization's contributions to the engineering profession, and I would welcome the opportunity to participate in a future meeting.
Sincerely,
Ted Richardson

FIGURE R–2. Refusal Letter (Sent as E-mail)

3. Give the negative message based on the facts or details.
4. Close by establishing or reestablishing a positive relationship.

Your opening should provide an appropriate context and establish a professional **tone**, for example by expressing appreciation for a reader's time, effort, or interest.

- The Screening Procedures Committee appreciates the time and effort you spent on your proposal for a new security-clearance procedure.

Next, review the circumstances of the situation sympathetically by placing yourself in the reader's position. Clearly detail the reasons you cannot do what the reader wants—even though you have not yet said you cannot do it. A good explanation should ideally detail the reasons for your refusal so thoroughly that the reader will accept the negative message as a logical conclusion, as shown in the following example.

- We reviewed the potential effects of implementing your proposed security-clearance procedure company-wide. We not only asked the Security Systems Department to review the data but also surveyed industry practices, sought the views of senior management, and submitted the idea to our legal staff. As a result of this process, we have reached the following conclusions:
  - The cost savings you project are correct only if the procedure could be required throughout the company.
  - The components of your procedure are legal, but most are not widely accepted by our industry.
  - Based on our survey, some components could alienate employees who would perceive them as violating an individual's rights.
  - Enforcing company-wide use would prove costly and impractical.

Do not belabor the negative message—state your refusal quickly, clearly, and as positively as possible.

- For those reasons, the committee recommends that divisions continue their current security-screening procedures.

Close your message in a way that reestablishes goodwill—do not repeat the bad news. (Avoid writing "Again, we are sorry we cannot use your idea.") Ideally, provide an alternative, as in the following:

- Because some components of your procedure may apply in certain circumstances, we would like to feature your ideas in the next issue of *The Guardian*. I have asked the editor to contact you next week. On behalf of the committee, thank you for the thoughtful proposal.

If such an option is not possible or reasonable, offer a friendly remark that anticipates a positive future relationship, assure the reader of your high opinion of his or her product or service, or merely wish the reader success.

For responding to a complaint, see **adjustment letters**. For refusing a job offer, see **acceptance / refusal letters**.

regarding / with regard to

In regards to and *with regards to* are incorrect **idioms** for *in regard to* and *with regard to*. Both *as regards* and *regarding* are acceptable variants.

- In ~~regards~~ *regard* to your last question, I think a meeting is a good idea.

- ~~With regards to~~ *Regarding* your last question, I think a meeting is a good idea.

regardless

Always use *regardless* instead of the nonstandard *irregardless*, which expresses a double negative. The prefix *ir-* renders the base word negative, but *regardless* is already negative, meaning "unmindful."

repetition

The deliberate use of repetition to build a sustained effect or to emphasize a feeling or an idea can be a powerful device. See also **emphasis**.

- Similarly, atoms *come and go* in a molecule, but the molecule *remains*; molecules *come and go* in a cell, but the cell *remains*; cells *come and go* in a body, but the body *remains*; persons *come and go* in an organization, but the organization *remains*.

  —Kenneth Boulding, *Beyond Economics*

Repetition of keywords from a previous sentence or paragraph can also be used effectively to achieve **transition**.

- For many years, *oil* has been a major industrial energy source. However, *oil* supplies are limited, and other sources of energy must be developed.

Be consistent in the word or phrase you use to refer to something. In technical writing, it is generally better to repeat a word or use a clear **pronoun reference** (so readers know that you mean the same thing) than to use **synonyms** to avoid repetition. See also **affectation**.

SYNONYMS	Several recent *analyses* support our conclusion. These *studies* cast doubt on the feasibility of long-range forecasting. The *reports*, however, are strictly theoretical.
CONSISTENT TERMS	Several recent *studies* support our conclusion. These *studies* cast doubt on the feasibility of long-range forecasting. *They* are, however, strictly theoretical.

Purposeless repetition, however, makes a sentence awkward and hides its key ideas. See also **conciseness**.

- She said that the customer ~~said that he~~ was canceling the order.

reports

A report is an organized presentation of factual information, often aimed at multiple **audiences** that may present the results of an investigation, a trip, or a research project. For any report—whether formal or informal—assessing the readers' needs is essential. Following is a list of report entries in this book:

feasibility reports 188
formal reports 198
investigative reports 292
laboratory reports 310
progress and activity reports 422
test reports 550
trip reports 563
trouble reports 563

Formal reports often present the results of long-term projects or those that involve multiple participants. (See also **collaborative writing**.) Such projects may be done either for your own organization or as a contractual requirement for another organization. Formal reports generally follow a precise format and include such elements as **abstracts** and **executive summaries**. See also **proposals**.

Informal and short reports normally run from a few paragraphs to a few pages and ordinarily include only an **introduction**, a body, a **conclusion**, and (if necessary) recommendations. Because of their brevity, informal reports are customarily written as **correspondence**, including **letters** (if sent outside your organization), **memos**, and **e-mails**.

The introduction announces the subject of the report, states its **purpose**, and gives any essential background information. It may also summarize the conclusions, findings, or recommendations made in the report. The body presents a clearly organized account of the report's subject—the results of a test carried out, the status of a project, and other details readers may need. The amount of detail to include depends on your reader's knowledge, your **scope**, and the complexity of the subject.

The conclusion summarizes your findings and interprets their significance for readers. In some reports, a final, separate section gives recommendations; in others, the conclusions and the recommendations are combined into one section. This final section makes suggestions

for a course of action based on the data you have presented. See also **persuasion**.

repurposing

Repurposing is the copying or converting of existing content, such as written text and **visuals**, from one document or medium into another for a different **purpose**.* For example, if you are preparing a promotional **brochure**, you may be able to reuse material from a product **description** that is currently published on your organization's Web site. The brochure may then be printed or even placed on the Web site where it can be downloaded. See also **selecting the medium**.

In the workplace, this process saves time because content that often requires substantial effort to develop need not be re-created for each new application. The process of repurposing may be as simple as copying and pasting content from one document into another or as complex as distributing content and updates through a system of **content management**.

Content can be repurposed exactly as it is written only if it fits the **scope**, **audience**, and purpose of the new document. If the content alters the focus of these areas, you must adapt the content to fit its new **context**, as described in the following sections.

Repurpose for the Context

Staying focused on the purpose of your new document is critical, especially when repurposing content between different media. If you are writing a sales **proposal**, for example, and you only need to describe the **specifications** for a product, it may be useful to repurpose the specification list from your organization's Web site. However, the purpose of the Web-site content may be *to inform* customers about your products, whereas the purpose of a proposal is *to persuade* customers to buy your products. To effectively use the repurposed content in your proposal, you may need to adapt the **tense**, **voice**, **tone**, **grammar**, and **point of view** to make the repurposed content more persuasive and fit within the context of a sales proposal.

*The reuse of standard texts or content in technical publications is often referred to as "single-source publishing" or simply "single sourcing." See *www.stcsig.org/ss*. Traditionally, such reuse of standard texts has been referred to as "boilerplate."

Repurpose for the Medium

The proper **style** and **format** of content written for a specific medium, such as a brochure or fact sheet, may not work as effectively when repurposed for a different medium, such as a Web site. Solid blocks of text may be easy to read in a brochure, but Web readers often need blocks of text to be separated into bulleted **lists** or very short paragraphs because readers process information differently when reading on a computer monitor. Adapt the **layout and design** of the repurposed content as appropriate to accommodate your reader's needs for the medium. See also **writing for the Web**.

❖ ETHICS NOTE In the workplace, repurposing content within an organization does not violate **copyright** because an organization owns the information it creates and can share it across the company. Likewise, a writer in an organization may use and repurpose material in the public domain and, with some limitations, content that is licensed under Creative Commons (see *http://creativecommons.org/about*). See also **blogs and forums** and *Digital Tip: Using Collaborative Software* on page 75.

In the classroom, of course, the use of content or someone else's unique ideas without acknowledgment or the use of someone else's exact words without **quotation marks** and appropriate credit is **plagiarism**. ❖

requests for proposals

When a company or another organization needs a task performed or a service provided outside its staff expertise or capabilities, it seeks help from vendors. The company seeking help usually makes its requirements known by issuing a request for proposals (RFP) for vendors to evaluate and decide whether to bid on the project.

Although RFPs lay out an organization's requirements, they usually do not specify how these requirements are to be met.* Potential vendors prepare **proposals** to describe their solutions for meeting an RFP's requirements.

RFP Structure

Like proposals, RFPs vary in length and structure. The scope of information and even the terminology used will vary with the task or service

*A related document is an invitation for bids (IFB). An IFB specifically defines the quantity, type, and specifications for an item that an organization intends to purchase.

being solicited. The **purpose** and **context** of RFPs also vary because each involves unique legal, budgetary, confidentiality, and administrative considerations. The following sections describe typical components for RFPs.

Information About Your Company. One section should describe your company's mission, goals, size, facility locations, and position in the marketplace, as well as provide your company contact information. This section parallels the "Description of Vendor" section in proposals (see Figure P–8, page 452).

Project Description. Another section, sometimes called "Scope of Work" or "Workscope Description," describes the deliverable (the project or service) you need, with a detailed list of requirements. Requirements can be described in a summary statement, as shown in the following examples:

- The project deliverable will be a questionnaire to be mailed to approximately 400 adults regarding their consumer experiences with various health-care providers. . . .
- The deliverable will be a networked online forms package for approximately 1,200 employees, enabling information to be completed online, stored in a database, routed via e-mail, and printed on paper. The package shall be integrated into the company's current network environment at its headquarters. . . .

The project description may also indicate whether the deliverable must be created new or obtained commercially and adapted to the project's needs, as for software development. This section can also specify other details, such as a project-management plan and any warranty or liability requirements.

Delivery Schedule. For complex projects lasting a month or longer, specify the time allotted for the project and a proposed schedule of tasks.

Proposal Description. An RFP may provide format requirements; number of copies expected; due date; and where, to whom, and how (registered mail, courier service, etc.) it should be sent. If an electronic file is required, some firms include an electronic template.

Vendor Qualifications. Most RFPs request a summary of the vendor's experience and may require references from recent customers. Often

RFPs request the vendor's professional certifications, number of employees, years in business, quality-control procedures, awards and honors, and the résumés of the principal employees assigned to the project.

Proposal-Evaluation Criteria. The proposal-evaluation section informs vendors of the firm's selection criteria. They may select a firm solely on cost, cost and vendor past performance, or technical expertise. Some firms grade proposals with a point system on a scale of 100 or 1,000 total points, as in the following sample:

- Proposal-Evaluation Criteria

CRITERIA	POINTS
Administrative	50
Technical	700
Management	100
Price	100
Presentation and demonstration	50
Total	**1,000**

Appendixes. Some RFPs include one or more appendixes or "Attachments" for sample forms and questionnaires, a sample contract, a company's server and workstation configurations, workflow-analysis diagrams, dates and times when vendors can visit the work site before finalizing their proposals, and other essentials too detailed for the body of the RFP.

❖ ETHICS NOTE If your RFP contains any company-confidential information, you could include a legally binding nondisclosure statement for vendors to sign before you send the full RFP. Many companies also include a guarantee not to open proposals before the due date and never to disclose information in one vendor's proposal to a competing vendor. ❖

WEB LINK	Sample Request for Proposals
To view the RFP that accompanies the sample proposal in Figure P–8, see ***bedfordstmartins.com/alred*** and select *Model Documents Gallery*.	

research

DIRECTORY

Primary Research 479
Secondary Research 480
Library Research Strategies 480
Online Catalogs (Locating Books) 481
Online Databases and Indexes (Locating Articles) 481
Reference Works 482
Internet Research Strategies 483
Search Engines 483
Writer's Checklist: Using Search Engines and Keywords 484
Web Subject Directories 484
Evaluating Sources 485
Writer's Checklist: Evaluating Print and Online Sources 485

Research is the process of investigation—the discovery of information. To be focused, research must be preceded by **preparation**, especially consideration of your **audience**, **purpose**, and **scope**. Effective **note-taking** is essential for a coherent **organization** that strategically integrates your own ideas, supporting facts, and any well-selected **quotations** into an effective draft and final document. See also **documenting sources**, **outlining**, and "Five Steps to Successful Writing" on page xv.

In an academic setting, your preparatory resources include not only the Internet but also conversations with your fellow students, instructors, and especially a reference librarian. On the job, your main resources are your own knowledge and experience and that of your colleagues. In the workplace, the most important sources of information may also include **test reports**, **laboratory reports**, and the like. In this setting, begin by **brainstorming** with colleagues about what sources will be most useful to your topic and how you can find them.

Primary Research

Primary research is the gathering of raw data from such sources as firsthand experience, interviews, direct observation, surveys and **questionnaires**, experiments, **meetings**, and the like. In fact, direct observation and interaction are the only ways to obtain certain kinds of information, such as about human and animal behavior, certain natural phenomena, and the operation of systems and equipment. You can also conduct primary research on the Internet by participating in discussion groups and newsgroups and by using **e-mail** to request

information from specific audiences. See also **interviewing for information** and **listening**.

❖ ETHICS NOTE If you conduct research that involves observation or a questionnaire at your university or college, ask your instructor whether your methods or questions are appropriate and whether you may need to file an application with your school's institutional review board (IRB). For an observation, be sure to obtain permission in advance and remain as unobtrusive as possible during your observation. Keep accurate, complete records that indicate date, time of day, duration of the observation, and so on. Save interpretations of your observations for future analysis. ❖

Secondary Research

Secondary research is the gathering of information that has been previously analyzed, assessed, evaluated, compiled, or otherwise organized into accessible form. Sources include books and articles as well as **reports**, Web documents, audio and video recordings, podcasts, **correspondence**, **minutes of meetings**, **brochures**, and so forth. The following two sections—Library Research Strategies and Internet Research Strategies—provide methods for finding secondary sources.

As you seek information, keep in mind that in most cases the more recent the information, the better. Recently published periodicals and newspapers—as well as academic (.edu), organizational (.org), and government (.gov) Web sites—can be good sources of current information and can include published interviews, articles, papers, and conference proceedings. See *Writer's Checklist: Evaluating Print and Online Sources* on page 485.

When a resource seems useful, read it carefully and take notes that include any additional questions about your topic. Some of your questions may eventually be answered in other sources; those that remain unanswered can guide you to further primary research. For example, you may discover that you need to interview an expert. Not only can someone skilled in a field answer many of your questions, but he or she can also suggest further sources of information. See **paraphrasing** and **plagiarism**.

Library Research Strategies

The library provides organized paths into scholarship and the Internet as well as specialized resources—such as licensed online databases, indexes, catalogs, and directories—that are not accessible through standard Web searches. The first step in using library resources, either in an academic institution or in a workplace, is to develop a search strategy

appropriate to the information needed for your topic. You may want to begin by asking a reference librarian for help (in person, by phone, by live chat, or by e-mail) to find the best print or online resources for your topic—a brief conversation can focus your research and save you time. In addition, use your library's homepage for access to its catalogs, databases of articles, subject directories to the Web, and more.

Your search strategy depends on the kind of information you are seeking. For example, if you need the latest data offered by government research, check the Web, as described later in this entry. Likewise, if you need a current scholarly article on a topic, search an online database (such as EBSCOhost's Academic Search Premier) subscribed to by your library. For an overview of a subject, you might turn to an encyclopedia; for historical background, your best resources are books, journals, and primary documents (such as a technical specification).

DIGITAL TIP

Storing Search Results

Databases offer various ways to save your results. You may be able to save your searches and results within the database itself by creating a personal account, by sending selected references and full-text articles to an e-mail account, or by exporting them to citation-management software such as RefWorks, Endnote, or Zotero. These programs allow you to build your own database of references from multiple sources, sort them into folders, and generate bibliographies in the format of your choice. Database search tools will vary from library to library, so contact a reference librarian for usage guidance at your library.

Online Catalogs (Locating Books). An online catalog—accessed through library research terminals and through the Internet—allows you to search a library's book collection, indicates a book's location and availability, and may allow you to arrange an interlibrary loan.

You can search a library's online catalog by author, title, keyword, or subject. The most common ways of searching for a specific topic are by subject or by keyword. If your search turns up too many results, you can usually narrow it by using the "limit search" or "advanced search" option.

Online Databases and Indexes (Locating Articles). Most libraries subscribe to online databases, such as the following, which are usually available through a library's Web site:

- *EBSCOhost's Academic Search Premier*: a large multidisciplinary database, providing full text for nearly 4,500 periodicals, including more than 3,700 peer-reviewed journals
- *Expanded Academic ASAP*: a large database covering general-interest and scholarly journals plus business, law, and health-care publications (many in full text)
- *ERIC (Educational Resources Information Center)*: a U.S. Department of Education database providing access to journals and reports in education
- *JSTOR*: a full-text, archival collection of journals in humanities, social sciences, and sciences
- *Lexis/Nexis Academic*: a collection of databases that is particularly strong for news, business, legal, and corporate and financial information (most articles in full text) as well as congressional, statistical, and government resources

These databases, sometimes called *periodical indexes*, are excellent resources for articles published within the last 10 to 20 years. Many include descriptive abstracts and full texts of articles. To find older articles, you may need to consult a print index, such as the *Readers' Guide to Periodical Literature* and the *New York Times Index*, both of which have been digitized and may be available in some libraries.

Reference Works. In addition to articles, books, and Web sources, you may want to consult reference works such as encyclopedias, dictionaries, and manuals for an overview of your subject. Ask your reference librarian to recommend works and **bibliographies** that are most relevant to your topic. Many are available online and can be accessed through your library's homepage.

ENCYCLOPEDIAS. Encyclopedias are comprehensive, multivolume collections of articles arranged alphabetically. Some cover a wide range of subjects, while others—such as *The Encyclopedia of Careers and Vocational Guidance*, 15th ed. (Chicago: Ferguson, 2010)—focus on specific areas. The free online encyclopedia Wikipedia at *www.wikipedia.org* should be used only as a starting point for your research because users continuously update entries (with minimal editorial filtering).

DICTIONARIES. Specialized **dictionaries** define terms used in a particular field, such as business, computers, architecture, or consumer affairs, and they offer detailed definitions of field-specific terms, usually written in straightforward language.

HANDBOOKS AND MANUALS. Handbooks and manuals are typically one-volume compilations of frequently used information in a particular field. They offer brief definitions of terms or concepts, standards for presenting information, procedures for documenting sources, and **visuals** such as **graphs** and **tables**.

BIBLIOGRAPHIES. Bibliographies list books, periodicals, and other research materials published in areas such as engineering, medicine, the humanities, and the social sciences.

GENERAL GUIDES. The *Guide to Reference* at *www.guidetoreference.org* can help you locate reference books, indexes, and other research materials. Check your library's homepage or ask a reference librarian if your library subscribes to this or another particular index.

OTHER LIBRARY RESOURCES. Many libraries offer special kinds of research information. For example, a library may provide access to data that can be downloaded into statistical packages, such as SPSS (statistical package for the social sciences) for manipulation. Others offer GIS (geographic information systems) software that links data to spatial information, allowing the researcher to create detailed maps that show factors such as income, ethnicity, or purchasing habits.

Internet Research Strategies

The Web varies widely in its completeness and accuracy, so you need to evaluate Internet sources critically by following the advice in *Writer's Checklist: Evaluating Print and Online Sources* on page 485.

Search Engines. Search engines use words or combinations of words that you specify to locate the documents or files that contain one or more of these words in their titles, descriptions, or text. Common search engines include Google (*www.google.com*), BING (*www.bing.com*), and Yahoo! (*www.yahoo.com*).

As comprehensive as search engines and directories may seem, none is complete or objective and they carry only a preselected range of content. Some, for example, may not index Adobe PDF files or Usenet newsgroups, and many cannot index databases and other non–HTML-based content. Search engines rank the sites they believe will be relevant to your search based on a number of different strategies. Although search engines vary in what and how they search, you can use some basic strategies, described in the following *Writer's Checklist*.

WRITER'S CHECKLIST **Using Search Engines and Keywords**

- ✔ Check any search tips available at the engine you use. For example, some engines allow you to use an advanced search that narrows your search by combining phrases with double quotation marks: "usability testing" will return only pages that have the full compound phrase.
- ✔ Enter keywords and phrases that are as specific to your topic as possible. For example, if you are looking for information about *nuclear power* and enter only the term *nuclear*, the search will also yield listings for *nuclear family*, *nuclear medicine*, and hundreds of others not related to your topic.
- ✔ Try several search engines to get more varied results and remember that search engines may sell high rankings to advertisers and therefore may not highlight pages most relevant to your search.
- ✔ Consider using a metasearch engine, such as Dogpile (*www.dogpile.com*) and Metacrawler (*www.metacrawler.com*), if you are interested in obtaining as many hits as possible.
- ✔ Refine and narrow your terms as you evaluate the results of each search.

Web Subject Directories. A subject directory (also known as an *index*) organizes information by broad subject categories (natural sciences, entertainment, health, sports) and related subtopics (medicine, oceanography, physics). One such directory is *http://directory.google.com*. A subject-directory search eventually produces a list of specific sites that contain information about the topics you request.

In addition to the subject directories offered by many search engines, the following directories will help you to conduct selective, scholarly research on the Web:

R

Infomine	*http://infomine.ucr.edu*
The Internet Public Library	*www.ipl.org*
The WWW Virtual Library	*www.vlib.org*

The Internet includes numerous directories and sites devoted to specific subject areas. Following are some suggested resources for researching science and technology.

CIO's Resource Centers	*www.cio.com/solutions/research-and-analysis*
IEEE Spectrum Online	*www.spectrum.ieee.org*
National Science Foundation	*www.nsf.gov*
LSU Libraries Federal Agency Directory	*www.lib.lsu.edu/gov/index.html*
FedStats	*www.fedstats.gov*

Some sites combine search engines with directories; for example, Google operates both a standard search engine and directory and a special contributor-generated directory referred to as an "Open Directory" (*http://dmoz.org*).

Evaluating Sources

The easiest way to ensure that information is valid is to obtain it from a reputable source. For Internet sources, be especially concerned about the validity of the information provided. Because anyone can publish on the Web, it is sometimes difficult to determine authorship of a document, and frequently a person's qualifications for speaking on a topic are absent or questionable. The Internet versions of established, reputable journals in medicine, management, engineering, computer software, and the like merit the same level of trust as the printed versions. Use the following domain abbreviations to help you determine an Internet site sponsor:

.aero	aerospace industry	.mil	U.S. military
.biz	business	.museum	museum
.com	company or individual	.name	individual
.coop	business cooperative	.net	network provider
.edu	college or university	.org	nonprofit organization
.gov	federal government	.int	international
.pro	professionals	.info	general use

As you move away from established, reputable sites, exercise more caution. Be especially wary of unmoderated, public Web forums. Collectively generated Web sites, such as Wikipedia, often make no guarantee of the validity of information on their sites (see *http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wikipedia:General_disclaimer*).

WRITER'S CHECKLIST **Evaluating Print and Online Sources**

Keep in mind the following four criteria when evaluating Internet sources: authority, accuracy, bias, and currency.*

FOR ALL SOURCES

- ✔ Is the resource recent enough and relevant to your topic? Is it readily available?
- ✔ Who is the intended audience? Is it the mainstream public? A small group of professionals?
- ✔ Who is the author(s)? Is the author(s) an authority on the subject?

(*continued*)

*For more details, see Leigh Ryan and Lisa Zimmereli, *The Bedford Guide for Writing Tutors*, 5th ed. (Boston: Bedford/St. Martin's, 2010).

WRITER'S CHECKLIST **Evaluating Print and Online Sources** (*continued*)

- ✔ Does the author(s) provide enough supporting evidence and document sources so that you can verify the information's accuracy?
- ✔ Is the information presented in an objective, unbiased way? Are any biases made clear? Are opinions clearly labeled? Are viewpoints balanced, or are opposing opinions acknowledged?
- ✔ Are the language, tone, and style appropriate and cogent?

FOR A BOOK

- ✔ Does the preface or introduction indicate the author's or book's purpose?
- ✔ Does the table of contents relate to your topic? Does the index contain terms related to your topic?
- ✔ Are the chapters useful? Skim through one chapter that seems related to your topic — notice especially the introduction, headings, and closing.

FOR AN ARTICLE

- ✔ Is the publisher of the magazine or other periodical well known?
- ✔ What is the article's purpose? For a journal article, read the abstract; for a newspaper article, read the headline and opening sentences.
- ✔ Does the article contain informative diagrams or other visuals that indicate its scope?

FOR A WEB SITE

- ✔ Does a reputable group or organization sponsor or maintain the site?
- ✔ Are the purpose and scope of the site clearly stated? Check the "Mission Statement" or "About Us" pages. Does the site carry any disclaimers?
- ✔ Is the site updated, thus current? Are the links functional and up to date?
- ✔ Is the documentation authoritative and credible? Check the links to other sources and cross-check facts at other reputable Web sites, such as academic ones.
- ✔ Is the site well designed? Is the material well written and error free?

R

WEB LINK **Evaluating Online Sources**

For a tutorial on evaluating information online, see ***bedfordstmartins.com/alred*** and select *Try a tutorial*, "On evaluating online sources." For links to additional related resources, select *Links for Handbook Entries*.

resignation letters

Resignation **letters** (or **memos**), as shown in Figures R–3 and R–4 on page 488, should be as positive as possible, regardless of the reason you are leaving a job. You usually write a resignation letter to your supervisor or to an appropriate person in the Human Resources Department.

Home address

227 Kenwood Drive
Austin, TX 78719
January 6, 2012

R. W. Johnson, Director of Metallurgy
Hannibal Laboratories
1914 East 6th Street
Austin, TX 78702

Dear Mr. Johnson:

Positive opening

My three years at Hannibal Laboratories have been an invaluable period of learning and professional development. I arrived as a novice, and I believe that today I am a professional—primarily as a result of the personal attention and tutoring I have received from my superiors and the fine example set by both my superiors and my peers.

Reason for leaving

I believe, however, that the time has come for me to move on to a larger company that can give me an opportunity to continue my professional development. Therefore, I have accepted a position with Procter & Gamble, where I am scheduled to begin on January 30. Thus, my last day at Hannibal will be January 20. I will be happy to train my replacement during the next two weeks.

Positive closing

Many thanks for the experience I have gained and best wishes for the future.

Sincerely,

J. L. Washburne

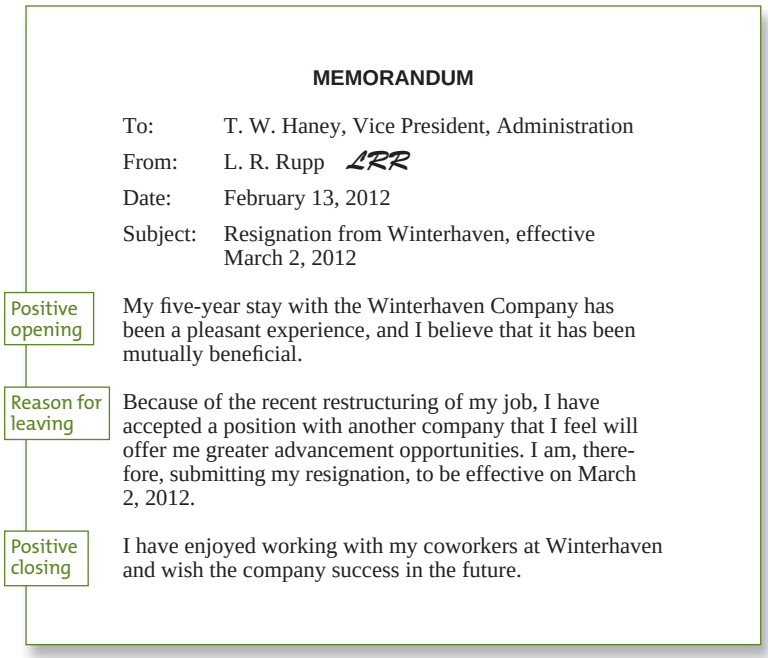
J. L. Washburne

FIGURE R–3. Resignation Letter (to Accept a Better Position)

Use the following guidelines:

- Start on a positive note, regardless of the circumstances under which you are leaving.
- Consider pointing out how you have benefited from working for the company or say something complimentary about the company.
- Comment on something positive about the people with whom you have been associated.
- Explain why you are leaving in an objective, factual tone.
- Avoid angry recriminations because your resignation will remain on file with the company and could haunt you in the future should you need references.

Your letter or memo should give enough notice to allow your employer time to find a replacement. It might be no more than two weeks or it might be enough time to enable you to train your replacement. Some organizations may ask for a notice equivalent to the number of weeks



MEMORANDUM

To: T. W. Haney, Vice President, Administration

From: L. R. Rupp *LRR*

Date: February 13, 2012

Subject: Resignation from Winterhaven, effective March 2, 2012

Positive opening

My five-year stay with the Winterhaven Company has been a pleasant experience, and I believe that it has been mutually beneficial.

Reason for leaving

Because of the recent restructuring of my job, I have accepted a position with another company that I feel will offer me greater advancement opportunities. I am, therefore, submitting my resignation, to be effective on March 2, 2012.

Positive closing

I have enjoyed working with my coworkers at Winterhaven and wish the company success in the future.

FIGURE R–4. Resignation Memo (Under Negative Conditions)

of vacation you receive. Check the policy of your employer before you begin your letter.

The sample resignation letter in Figure R–3 is from an employee who is leaving to take a job offering greater opportunities. The memo of resignation in Figure R–4 is written by an employee who is leaving because her position has been reclassified and her supervisor has not supported her advancement, but no personal conflict is mentioned. Notice that it opens and closes positively and that the reason for the resignation is stated without apparent anger or bitterness. For strategies concerning negative messages, see **correspondence** and **refusal letters**.

respective / respectively

Respective is an **adjective** that means "pertaining to two or more things regarded individually." ("The cultures were returned to their *respective* incubators.") *Respectively* is the adverb form of *respective*, meaning "singly, in the order designated."

- The first, second, and third engineering design award winners were Maria Juarez, Dan Wesp, and Simone Luce, *respectively*.

Respective and *respectively* are unnecessary if the meaning of individuality is clear.

- *Each* ~~The~~ committee *member* ~~members~~ prepared *a report.* ~~their respective reports.~~

restrictive and nonrestrictive elements

Modifying **phrases** and **clauses** may be either restrictive or nonrestrictive. A *nonrestrictive phrase or clause* provides additional information about what it modifies, but it does not restrict the meaning of what it modifies. A nonrestrictive phrase or clause can be removed without changing the essential meaning of the sentence. It is a parenthetical element that is set off by **commas** to show its loose relationship with the rest of the sentence.

NONRESTRICTIVE This instrument, *which is called a backscatter gauge*, fires beta particles at an object and counts the particles that bounce back.

A *restrictive phrase or clause* limits, or restricts, the meaning of what it modifies. If it were removed, the essential meaning of the sentence would change. Because a restrictive phrase or clause is essential to the meaning of the sentence, it is never set off by commas.

RESTRICTIVE All employees *wishing to donate blood* may take Thursday afternoon off.

Writers need to distinguish between nonrestrictive and restrictive elements. The same sentence can take on two entirely different meanings, depending on whether a modifying element is set off by commas (because it is nonrestrictive) or is not (because it is restrictive). A slip by the writer can not only mislead **readers** but also embarrass the writer.

MISLEADING He gave a poor performance evaluation to the staff members who protested to the Human Resources Department.
[This suggests that he gave the poor evaluation because the staff members had protested.]

ACCURATE He gave a poor performance evaluation to the staff members, who protested to the Human Resources Department.
[This suggests that the staff members protested because of the poor evaluation.]

Use *which* to introduce nonrestrictive clauses and *that* to introduce restrictive clauses.

NONRESTRICTIVE Web 2.0 technology, which allows users to create and share content, differs from the "user as consumer of content" model of Web 1.0.

RESTRICTIVE Companies *that* diversify usually succeed.

résumés

DIRECTORY

Sample Résumés 492
Analyzing Your Background 501
Returning Job Seekers 501
Organizing Your Résumé (Sections) 502
Heading 503
Job Objective vs. Tagline 503
Qualifications Summary 504

Education 504
Employment Experience 505
Related Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities 506
Honors and Activities 506
References and Portfolios 506
Electronic Résumés 507
Web Résumés 507
Scannable and Plain-Text Résumés 507
E-mail–Attached Résumés 508

A résumé is a document that serves as the key component of an effective **job search** and the foundation for your **application cover letter** (often referred to as a *cover letter*). The résumé is a snapshot of the professional attributes you will bring to a particular position: a summary of your professional experience, relevant accomplishments, and education. The length of your résumé will depend on your level of experience. Limit your résumé* to one page unless your credentials, skills, and abilities are significant and match those a prospective employer is seeking to fill a particular position. Prospective employers use the information in the résumé and application cover letter to screen applicants and select candidates for the interview process. During a job interview, the content of your résumé and application cover letter provide the interviewer with a guideline for developing specific questions. See also **interviewing for a job**.

The résumé is typically the first contact an employer has with a potential employee and will serve as your personal introduction. To ensure your résumé creates a positive first impression, make certain it is well organized, is carefully designed, is consistent in formatting, is free of errors, and generates interest in the reviewer. The content should emphasize the key knowledge, skills, and attributes you possess and, when possible, mirror those the employer is looking for in a candidate. Use a format that highlights your strengths and portrays your value. The **layout and design** should be attractive, uncluttered, and easy to read. Uniformity in the design will ensure that the reviewer is able to identify your value during a brief visual scan, and the strategic use of bold print to highlight items of interest will help draw the eye down the page. **Consistency** in the presentation of information is especially important in a résumé. For example, use the same spacing, punctuation, and date format

*A detailed résumé for someone in an academic or a scientific area is often called a *curriculum vitae* (also *vita* or *c.v.*). It may include education, publications, projects, grants, and awards as well as a full work history. Outside the United States, the term *curriculum vitae* is often used to mean *résumé*.

throughout (*2010–2012*, *01/2012*, or *May 2012*). **Proofreading** is essential. Mistakes in an application cover letter or résumé may eliminate you from consideration. Verify that all information you have provided is accurate and have someone else review it. For hard-copy résumés, use a quality printer and high-grade paper.

❖ ETHICS NOTE Be truthful. The consequences of giving false information in your résumé are serious. In fact, the truthfulness of your résumé reflects not only on your own ethical stance but also on the integrity with which you would represent the organization. See also **ethics in writing**. ❖

Sample Résumés

The sample résumés in this entry will stimulate your thinking about how to tailor your résumé to your own job search. Today's word-processing programs provide nearly unlimited opportunities for candidates to express their creative talents and market their value on paper yet still retain the professionalism associated with best business practices. Before you design and write your résumé, look at as many samples as possible, and then organize and format your own to best highlight your strengths, present your professional goals, and make the most persuasive case to your target employers. See also **persuasion**.

- Figure R–5 presents a conventional student résumé in which the student is seeking an entry-level position.
- Figure R–6 shows a résumé with a variation in the design and placement of conventional headings to highlight professional credentials.
- Figure R–7 presents a student résumé with a format that is appropriately nonconventional for the purpose of demonstrating the student's skill in graphic design to a target audience. This résumé matches the letter in Figure A–9.
- Figure R–8 depicts a résumé that incorporates a tagline and focuses on the applicant's management experience. A tagline is a short quotation summarizing your reasons for seeking a certain position. (Taglines are described in more detail on pages 503–4.) This résumé matches the letter in Figure A–10.
- Figure R–9 reflects the résumé of a candidate seeking to switch career fields. It uses a job title and immediately states a goal, followed by credentials.
- Figure R–10 focuses on how the applicant advanced and was promoted within a single company.
- Figure R–11 illustrates how an applicant can organize a résumé by combining functional and chronological elements.

Ana María López

Campus Address
148 University Drive
Bloomington, Indiana 47405
(812) 652-4781
aml@iu.edu

Home (after June 2012)
1436 West Schantz Avenue
Laurel, Pennsylvania 17322
(717) 399-2712
aml@yahoo.com

OBJECTIVE

Position as dental hygienist with dental practice emphasizing community service and education.

EDUCATION

Bachelor of Science in Dental Hygiene, expected June 2012
Indiana University

Licensure: August 2011
Grade Point Average: 3.88 out of possible 4.0
ADA Guzman Honors
Minor: Management Information Systems

DENTAL EXPERIENCE

Northpoint Dental Associates, Bloomington, Indiana, 2011
Dental Assistant, Summer and Fall Quarters
Developed office and laboratory management system.

Rodriguez Dental Associates, Bloomington, Indiana, 2010
Dental Assistant Intern
Prepared patients for exams; processed X-rays; maintained patient treatment records.
Associate Editor, *Community Health Newsletter*, 2009–2010
Wrote articles on good dental health practices; researched community health needs for editor; edited submissions.

COMPUTER PROFICIENCIES

Software: Microsoft Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Lotus
Hardware: Macintosh, IBM-PC
Medical: Magnus Patient Database System, Dentrix

VOLUNTEER ACTIVITY

Smile Power Student Volunteer (Summer 2009, 2010): Helped provide dental care, supplies, and education about disease prevention to underserved populations in rural Louisiana and Mississippi. 2010–2012

FIGURE R–5. Student Résumé (for an Entry-Level Position)

CHRIS RENAULT, RN

3785 Raleigh Court, #46 • Phoenix, AZ 67903
(555) 467-1115 • chris@resumepower.com

Qualifications

- ➢ *Recent Honors Graduate of Approved Nursing Program*
- ➢ *Current Arizona Nursing Licensure and BLS Certification*
- ➢ *Presently Completing Clinical Nurse Internship Program*

Education & Licensure

ARIZONA STATE UNIVERSITY
Tempe, AZ
Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN), 2012
Graduated summa cum laude (GPA: 4.0)

MOHAVE COMMUNITY COLLEGE
Kingman, AZ
Associate Degree in Nursing (AN), 2010
Graduated cum laude (GPA: 3.5)

Coursework Highlights: Family and Community Nursing, Health-Care Delivery Models, Health Assessment, Pathology, Microbiology, Nursing Research, Nursing of Older Adults, Health-Care Ethics

Arizona RN License, 2012
BLS Certification, 2012

Clinical Internship

CAMELBACK MEDICAL CENTER — Phoenix, AZ
Nurse Intern, 2011 to Present

- Accepted into new graduate RN training program and completing in-depth, eight-month rotation working under a trained preceptor.
- Gaining valuable clinical experience to assume the role of a professional nurse within an acute-care setting. Rotating through all medical center areas, including Postsurgical, Orthopedics, Pediatrics, Oncology, Emergency Department, Psychiatric Nursing, Cardiac Telemetry, and Critical Care.
- Developing speed and skill in the day-to-day functions of a staff nurse. Participating in patient assessment, treatment, medication disbursement, and surgical preparation as a member of the health-care team.
- Earned written commendations from preceptor for *"excellent ability to interact with patients and their families, showing a high degree of empathy, medical knowledge, and concern for quality and continuity of patient care."*

Community Involvement

Active Volunteer and Fundraising Coordinator, The American Cancer Society — Scottsdale, AZ, Chapter (2010 to Present)
Participant, Annual AIDS Walkathon (2007–2010) and "Find the Cure" Breast Cancer Awareness Marathon (2009, 2010)

FIGURE R–6. Résumé (Highlighting Professional Credentials). Prepared by Kim Isaacs, Advanced Career Systems, Inc.

JG

Joshua S. Goodman
222 Morewood Avenue
Pittsburgh, PA 15212
cell: 412-555-1212
jgoodman@aol.com

OBJECTIVE

A position as a graphic designer with responsibilities in information design, packaging, and media presentations.

GRAPHIC DESIGN EXPERIENCE

Assistant Designer • Dyer/Khan, Los Angeles, California
Summer 2010, Summer 2011
Assistant Designer in a versatile design studio. Responsible for design, layout, comps, mechanicals, and project management.
Clients: Paramount Pictures, Mattel Electronics, and Motown Records.

Photo Editor • Paramount Pictures Corporation, Los Angeles, California
Summer 2009
Photo Editor for merchandising department. Established art files for movie and television properties. Edited images used in merchandising. Maintained archive and database.

Production Assistant • Grafis, Los Angeles, California
Summer 2008
Production assistant at fast-paced design firm. Assisted with comps, mechanicals, and miscellaneous studio work.
Clients: ABC Television, A&M Records, and Ortho Products Division.

EDUCATION

Carnegie Mellon University, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania
BFA in Graphic Design — May 2012

Graphic Design
Corporate Identity
Industrial Design
Graphic Imaging Processes
Color Theory
Computer Graphics
Typography
Serigraphy
Photography
Video Production

COMPUTER PROFICIENCIES

XML, HTML, JavaScript, Forms, Macromedia Dreamweaver, Macromedia Flash Professional, Photoshop, Illustrator, Image Ready (Animated GIFs), CorelDRAW, DeepPaint, iGrafx Designer, MapEdit (Image Mapping), Scanning, Microsoft Access/ Excel, QuarkXPress.

ACTIVITIES

Member, Pittsburgh Graphic Design Society
Member, The Design Group

R

FIGURE R–7. Student Résumé (for a Graphic Design Job)

ROBERT MANDILLO
7761 Shalamar Drive
Dayton, Ohio 45424
(937) 255-4137
mand@juno.com

Tagline

"Seeking a management position in the aerospace industry with responsibility for developing new designs and products."

MANAGEMENT EXPERIENCE

Manager, Exhibit Design Lab — May 2005–Present
Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, Dayton, Ohio

Supervise 11 technicians in support of engineering exhibit design and production. Develop, evaluate, and improve materials and equipment for the design and construction of exhibits. Write specifications, negotiate with vendors, and initiate procurement activities for exhibit design support.

Supervisor, Graphics Illustrators — June 2002–April 2005
Henderson Advertising Agency, Cincinnati, Ohio

Supervised five illustrators and four drafting mechanics after promotion from Graphics Technician. Analyzed and approved work-order requirements. Selected appropriate media and techniques for orders. Rendered illustrations in pencil and ink. Converted department to CAD system.

EDUCATION

Master of Business Administration, 2011
University of Dayton, Ohio

Bachelor of Science in Mechanical Engineering Technology, 2002
Edison State College, Wooster, Ohio

Associate's Degree in Mechanical Drafting, 2000
Wooster Community College, Wooster, Ohio

PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATION

National Association of Mechanical Engineers

REFERENCES / WEB SITE

References, letters of recommendation, and a portfolio of original designs and drawings available online at www.juno.com/mand.

FIGURE R–8. Résumé (Applicant with Management Experience)

Linda H. Granger

lhg.granger@email.com
(206) 577-8869 / (206) 656-3324

942 Shower Lane Drive
Sun Valley Heights, VA 20109

Information Technology / Security Specialist

Seeking to build an exciting career in law enforcement, with a focus on the application of Information Technology (IT) / Information Security (INFOSEC).

- Application Design / System Analysis
- Testing / Implementation / Integration
- Program / Project Development
- Business Policies / Procedures
- Customer / Client Service
- Dynamic Team Building / Leadership

Academic Background

BACHELOR OF SCIENCE – INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY
Sun Valley University, VA, May 2011

Internship / Professional Experience

Federal Law Enforcement Training Center (FLETC), Arlington, VA *June–Sept. 2011*
Volunteer — Computer, Financial, Intelligence Division

- Accepted into the highly selective, competitive FLETC College Intern Summer Program
- Analyzed, evaluated, assessed the performance or operating methodology of forensic software
- Assisted law enforcement staff and instructors with office support in efforts to advance the mission of the FLETC
- Participated in and observed basic training classes and activities designed to develop and promote the growth of future law enforcement candidates

Board of Education, Forrest Hills, VA *Sept. 2009–June 2011*
Instructor / Substitute Teacher

- Helped provide an educational foundation designed to enable K–12 students to develop confidence, self-direction, and a lifelong interest in learning
- Fostered the development of communication, citizenship, and personal growth in the provision of curriculum through emotional and educational support, and guidance

Awards / Recognition

SUPERB ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT – FORENSIC DATA HUB
Federal Law Enforcement Training Center

FIGURE R–9. Résumé (Experienced Applicant Seeking Career Change)

CAROL ANN WALKER
1436 West Schantz Avenue
Laurel, Pennsylvania 17322
(717) 399-2712
caw@yahoo.com

FINANCIAL EXPERIENCE

KERFHEIMER CORPORATION, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Senior Financial Analyst, June 2007–Present
Report to Senior Vice President for Corporate Financial Planning. Develop manufacturing cost estimates totaling $30 million annually for mining and construction equipment with Department of Defense.

Financial Analyst, November 2004–June 2007
Developed $50-million funding estimates for major Department of Defense contracts for troop carriers and digging and earth-moving machines. Researched funding options, resulting in savings of $1.2 million.

FIRST BANK, INC., Bloomington, Indiana

Planning Analyst, September 1999–November 2004
Developed successful computer models for short- and long-range planning.

EDUCATION

Ph.D. in Finance: expected, June 2012
The Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania

M.S. in Business Administration, 2003
University of Wisconsin–Milwaukee
"Executive Curriculum" for employees identified as promising by their employers.

B.S. in Business Administration (*magna cum laude*), 1999
Indiana University
Emphasis: Finance Minor: Professional Writing

PUBLISHING AND MEMBERSHIP

Published "Developing Computer Models for Financial Planning," *Midwest Finance Journal* 34.2 (2009): 126–36.

Association for Corporate Financial Planning, Senior Member.

REFERENCES

References and a portfolio of financial plans are available on request.

FIGURE R–10. Advanced Résumé (Showing Promotion Within a Single Company)

CAROL ANN WALKER

1436 West Schantz Avenue • Laurel, PA 17322
(717) 399-2712 • caw@yahoo.com

Award-Winning Senior Financial Analyst

Astute senior analyst and corporate financial planner with 11 years of experience and proven success enhancing P&L scenarios by millions of dollars. Demonstrated ability to apply critical thinking and sound strategic/economic analysis to multidimensional business issues. Advanced computer skills include Hyperion, SQL, MS Office, and Crystal Reports.

Financial Analyst of the Year, 2010

Recipient of prestigious national award from the Association for Investment Management and Research (AIMR)

Areas of Expertise

- Financial Analysis & Planning
- Forecasting & Trend Projection
- Trend/Variance Analysis
- Comparative Analysis
- Expense Analysis
- Strategic Planning
- SEC & Financial Reporting
- Risk Assessment

Career Progression

KERFHEIMER CORPORATION — Philadelphia, PA 2004 to Present

Senior Financial Analyst, June 2007 to Present
Financial Analyst, November 2004 to June 2007

Rapidly promoted to lead team of 15 analysts in the management of financial/SEC reporting and analysis for publicly traded, $2.3-billion company. Develop financial/statistical models used to project and maximize corporate financial performance. Support nationwide sales team by providing financial metrics, trends, and forecasts.

Key Accomplishments:

- **Developed long-range funding requirements crucial to firm's subsequent capture of $1 billion** in government and military contracts.
- **Facilitated a 45% decrease in company's long-term debt** during several major building expansions through personally developed computer models for capital acquisition.
- **Jointly led large-scale systems conversion to Hyperion**, including personal upload of database in Essbase. Completed conversion without interrupting business operations.

FIGURE R–11. Advanced Résumé (Combining Functional and Chronological Elements). Prepared by Kim Isaacs, Advanced Career Systems, Inc. (*continued on next page*)

CAROL ANN WALKER

Résumé • Page Two

Career Progression (*continued*)

FIRST BANK, INC.—Bloomington, IN 1999 to 2004

Planning Analyst, September 1999 to November 2004
Compiled and distributed weekly, monthly, quarterly, and annual closings/financial reports, analyzing information for presentation to senior management. Prepared depreciation forecasts, actual-vs.-projected financial statements, key-matrix reports, tax-reporting packages, auditor packages, and balance-sheet reviews.

Key Accomplishments:

- **Devised strategies to acquire over $1 billion at 3% below market rate.**
- **Analyzed financial performance for consistency to plans and forecasts**, investigated trends and variances, and alerted senior management to areas requiring action.
- **Achieved an average 23% return on all personally recommended investments.** Applied critical thinking and sound financial and strategic analysis in all funding options research.

Education

THE WHARTON SCHOOL of the UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA (Philadelphia)

Ph.D. in Finance Candidate, Expected June 2012

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN–MILWAUKEE

M.S. in Business Administration, May 2003

INDIANA UNIVERSITY (Bloomington)

B.S. in Business Administration, Emphasis in Finance
(*magna cum laude*), May 1999

Affiliations

- Association for Investment Management and Research (AIMR), Member, 2006 to Present
- Association for Corporate Financial Planning (ACFP), Senior Member, 2004 to Present

Portfolio of Financial Plans Available on Request
(717) 399-2712 • caw@yahoo.com

FIGURE R–11. Advanced Résumé (Combining Functional and Chronological Elements) (*continued*)

WEB LINK	Annotated Sample Résumés
For more examples of résumés with helpful annotations, see *bedfordstmartins.com/alred* and select *Model Documents Gallery*.	

Analyzing Your Background

In preparing to write your résumé, determine what kind of job you are seeking. There is rarely a one-size-fits-all résumé and as you progress in your career, you gain experience holding positions in a variety of diverse industries. Review your credentials and highlight the information that will best support your objective and be most important to a prospective employer. Consider the following as you gather information:

- Schools you attended, degrees you hold, your major field of study, academic honors you were awarded, your grade point average, particular academic projects that reflect your best work; continuing education; conferences or seminars you have attended
- Jobs you have held, your principal and secondary duties in each job, when and how long you held each job, promotions, skills you developed in your jobs that a potential employer may value and seek in the ideal candidate, projects or accomplishments that reflect important contributions
- Other experiences and skills you have developed that would be of value in the kind of job you are seeking; extracurricular activities that have contributed to your learning experience; leadership assignments you have accepted; interpersonal and communication skills you have developed; speeches, public presentations, or classes you have given; collaborative work you have performed; publications you have contributed to; computer skills you have acquired or data-management programs you are proficient in using; languages you speak; notable awards or other types of recognition you have received

Use this information to brainstorm further details and personal attributes. Then, based on all the details, decide which to include in your résumé and how you can most effectively present your qualifications.

Returning Job Seekers

If you are returning to the workplace after an absence, most career experts say that it is important to acknowledge the gap in your career. This is particularly true if, for example, you are reentering the workforce because you have devoted a full-time period to care for children

or dependent adults. Do not undervalue such work. Although unpaid, it often provides experience that develops important time-management, problem-solving, organizational, and interpersonal skills. Although gaps in employment can be explained in the application cover letter, the following examples illustrate how you might reflect such experiences in a résumé. These samples would be especially appropriate for an applicant seeking employment in a field related to child or health care.

- **Primary Child-Care Provider, 2010–2012** Provided full-time care to three preschool children at home. Facilitated early learning activities; taught basic academic skills, nutrition, arts, and swimming. Organized schedules and events, managed the household, and served as Neighborhood-Watch Captain.
- **Home Caregiver, 2010–2012** Provided 60 hours per week in-home care for Alzheimer's patient. Coordinated health-care and medical appointments, developed and supervised exercise programs, completed and processed complex medical forms, administered medications, organized and maintained budgets, and managed home environment.

If you have performed volunteer work during such a period, list that experience. Volunteer work often results in the same experience as does full-time, paid work, a fact that your résumé should reflect, as in the following example:

- **School Association Coordinator, 2010–2012** Managed special activities of the High School Parent-Teacher Association. Planned and coordinated meetings, scheduled events, and supervised fund-drive operations. Raised $70,000 toward refurbishing the school auditorium.

Organizing Your Résumé (Sections)

The following résumé sections and section headings are typical and, depending on the subject matter resource, may sometimes be represented with alternative terminology as indicated in the following list. The sections you choose to include in your résumé and the order in which you list them should depend on your experience, your goals, the employer's needs, and any standard practices in your profession.

- Heading (name and contact information)
- Job Objective (Job Title, Tagline)
- Qualifications Summary (Professional Profile, Key Attributes)
- Education (Academic Education, Certifications)

- Employment Experience (Career History, Career Chronology)
- Related Skills and Abilities (Professional Affiliations, Volunteer Work, Networking Assets)
- Honors and Activities (Awards, Recognition, Notable Contributions)
- Miscellaneous (to highlight other volunteer work, publications, or affiliations you believe the employer would find valuable)
- References and Portfolios

There really is no right or wrong way to organize your résumé and any number of organizational patterns can be effective. For example, whether you place "education" before "employment experience" depends on the job you are seeking. The use of strategy in how you present your information lies in selecting the credentials that will strengthen your résumé the most. A recent graduate without much work experience may decide to list education first. A candidate with many years of job experience, including jobs directly related to the target position, may decide to list employment experience first. When you list information in the education and employment sections, use a reverse chronological sequence: list the most-recent employer or credential first, the next most-recent experience second, and so on.

Heading. At the top of your résumé, include your name, address, telephone number (home or cell), and a professional **e-mail** address.* Make sure that your name stands out on the page. If you are in transition and have both a school address and a permanent home address, include both underneath your name (see Figure R–5).

Job Objective vs. Tagline. Job objectives and job titles or taglines introduce the material in a résumé and help the reader quickly understand your goal. The differences between these two are slight but should be considered when organizing your résumé. A tagline is a brief quotation that summarizes your vision in seeking a particular employment opportunity. Although your personal objective may not provoke interest in the reviewer or meet the needs of a potential employer, a job title, tagline, or combination of both will immediately reveal your goal. Weigh the benefits of using a job title or tagline versus stating your objective. The following examples illustrate the difference between stating an objective and the use of a job title and tagline combination.

*Do not use a clever or an unprofessional e-mail address in employment correspondence; e-mail addresses that are based on your last name work well.

SAMPLE OBJECTIVE STATEMENTS

- A full-time computer-science position aimed at solving engineering problems and contributing to a management team.
- A position involving meeting the concerns of women, such as family planning, career counseling, or crisis management.
- A summer research or programming position providing opportunities to use software-development and software-debugging skills.

SAMPLE JOB TITLE AND TAGLINE COMBINATIONS

- FINANCIAL SERVICES / BANKING PROFESSIONAL
  "Ensuring the Financial Success of Customers, Clients, and Communities"
- MECHANICAL ENGINEER
  "Developing Innovative, Efficient, Environmentally Friendly Energy Solutions"
- FIREFIGHTER / EMT
  "Prevention, Mitigation, Response" or "Protecting Life, Property, and the Environment"

PROFESSIONALISM NOTE Although taglines might more readily address the needs of the employer over a personal job objective, they can be difficult to construct. Not everyone can create clever taglines; use them wisely and only when you are confident that one is warranted and well written.

Qualifications Summary. You may wish to include a brief summary of your qualifications to persuade hiring managers to select you for an interview. Sometimes called a *professional profile*, *summary statement*, or *career summary*, a qualifications summary can include skills, achievements, experience, or personal qualities that make you especially well suited to the position. You may give this section a unique heading or simply use a job title as shown in Figure R–9 and Figure R–11.

Education. List the school(s) you have attended, the degree(s) you received and the dates you received them, your major field(s) of study, and any academic honors you have earned. Most career-development professionals recommend that you should only include your grade point average (GPA) if it is 3.0 or higher. List individual courses if they are unusually impressive, if they provide the opportunity to include keywords, or if your résumé is otherwise sparse (see Figures R–6 and R–7). Consider including any special skills developed or projects completed in your course work. Mention high school only if you do not possess higher education or if you want to call attention to special high school achievements, awards, projects, programs, internships, or study abroad.

Employment Experience. Organize your employment experience in reverse chronological order, starting with your most-recent job and working backward under a single heading. You can also organize your experience functionally by clustering similar types of jobs into several sections with specific section headings such as "Management," "Leadership," "Administration," or "Logistics."

Depending on the situation, one type of arrangement might be more persuasive than the other. For example, if you are applying for an accounting job but have no experience in accounting, simply list past and present jobs in chronological order (most to least recent). If you are applying for a supervisory position and have had three supervisory jobs in addition to two nonsupervisory positions, you might choose to create a section heading called "Supervisory Experience" and list the three supervisory jobs; followed by another section heading labeled "General Experience" to include the nonsupervisory jobs.

In general, consider the following guidelines when working on the "Experience" section of your résumé.

- Include jobs or internships when they relate directly to the position you are seeking. Including such experiences can make a résumé more persuasive if they have helped you develop relevant skills.
- Include extracurricular experiences, such as taking on a leadership position in a college organization or directing a community-service project, if they demonstrate the skills valued by a potential employer.
- Determining how to portray military service can be challenging because of the acquisition of multiple occupational specialties and the performance of service in multiple locations. List this service as a job; give the dates served, the duty specialty, and the rank at discharge. Discuss military duties if they relate to the job you are seeking.
- For each job or experience, list both the job and company titles. Throughout each section, consistently begin with either the job or the company name, depending on which will likely be more impressive to potential employers.
- Under each job or experience, provide a concise description of your accomplishments. By listing your accomplishments and quantifying them with numbers, percentages, or monetary value, you will let the employer know what separates you from the competition. That said, it's not a good idea to omit job duties entirely from your résumé; employers still want to see the scope of what you were responsible for. A good strategy for effectively organizing both is to create a brief paragraph outlining your responsibilities, followed by a bulleted list of your strongest accomplishments in the position.

- Focus as much as possible on your achievements in your work history. ("Increased employee retention rate by 16 percent by developing a training program.") Employers will picture themselves on the receiving end of your previous accomplishments.
- Use action verbs ("managed," "supervised," "developed," "facilitated," and "analyzed"). Be consistent when using past or present tense. Even though the résumé is about you, do not use "I" (for example, instead of "I was promoted to Section Leader," use "Promoted to Section Leader").

Related Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities. Employers are interested in hiring applicants with a variety of skills or the ability to learn new ones quickly. Depending on the position, you might list items such as fluency in foreign languages, writing and editing abilities, specialized technical knowledge, or computer skills (including knowledge of specific languages, software, and hardware).

Honors and Activities. List any honors and unique activities near the end of your résumé, unless they are exceptionally notable or would be more persuasive for a particular objective. Include items such as student or community activities, professional or club memberships, awards received, and published works. Do not duplicate information given in other categories, and include only information that supports your employment objective. Use a heading for this section that fits its contents, such as "Activities," "Honors," "Professional Affiliations," or "Publications and Memberships."

References and Portfolios. Avoid specifying on your résumé that references are available unless that is standard practice in your profession or your résumé is sparse. Employers assume that a well-prepared job seeker will provide a list of professional references. Create a separate list of references in the same format design and layout as your résumé, and be ready to provide this page to prospective employers during the interview process. Always seek permission from anyone you list as a reference and notify them in advance when you provide their information to a prospective employer.

A portfolio is a collection of samples in a binder or on the Internet of your most impressive work and accomplishments. The portfolio can include successful documents you have written, articles, letters of praise from employers, copies of awards and certificates, and a compact disk (CD) with links to samples of your work. If you have developed a portfolio, you can include the phrase "Portfolio available on request" in your résumé. If portfolios are standard in your profession, you might even include a small section that outlines the contents of your portfolio.

PROFESSIONALISM NOTE Avoid listing the salary you desire in the application letter or résumé unless specifically requested to do so by an employer. See **salary negotiations**.

Electronic Résumés

In addition to the traditional paper résumé, many resources offer the opportunity to post a Web-based résumé. Some employers may request you to submit a "scannable" plain-text résumé through e-mail or complete an online application form to be included in an organization's database. Technology continues to change. To ensure that you maintain a competitive edge in seeking employment opportunity, remain current with the automated forms, programs, and protocols that employers prefer by reviewing popular job-search sites, such as Monster.com at *www.monster.com* or CareerBuilder at *www.careerbuilder.com*.

Web Résumés. If you plan to post your résumé on your own Web site, keep the following points in mind:

- Follow the general advice for **writing for the Web**, and view your résumé on several browsers to see how it looks.
- Just below your name, you may wish to provide a series of internal page links to such important categories as "experience" and "education."
- Consider building a multipage site for displaying a work portfolio, publications, reference letters, and other related materials.
- To maintain privacy and protect your personal information, include a "contact link" in Web-based résumés so prospective employers and recruiters can reach you. This way, you will not have to include your e-mail address and phone number, or risk your safety by publishing your home address online.

The disadvantage of posting a résumé at your own Web site is that you must attract the attention of employers on your own. For that reason, commercial services may be a better option because they offer a variety of job-search resources and often work with multiple employers and recruiters.

Scannable and Plain-Text Résumés. A scannable résumé format is a paper document that you mail to the employer; after it is received, the document will be scanned into an automated program, then downloaded into the company's searchable database. These résumés should not contain decorative fonts, underlining, shading, letters that touch

each other, or other features that will not scan easily. Before sending, scan the résumé yourself to make sure that it is legible.

Some employers request ASCII or plain-text résumés via e-mail, which can be added directly into the résumé database without scanning. The ASCII résumés also allow employers to read the file no matter what type of software they are using. You can copy and paste such a résumé directly into the body of the e-mail message.

For résumés that will be downloaded into databases, it is better to use nouns than verbs to describe experience and skills (*designer* and *management* rather than *designed* and *managed*). Keywords, also called *descriptors*, allow potential employers to search the database for qualified candidates, so be sure to use keywords that mirror those used in job announcements or job descriptions that best match your interests and qualifications. This section can follow the main heading or appear near the end of your résumé.

E-mail–Attached Résumés. An employer may request, or you may prefer to submit, a résumé as an e-mail attachment. If the employer does not specify the file format (such as Word 2003 or Word 2007), consider using a relatively plain design and sending the résumé as a rich text format (.rtf) document. If the retention of formatting is important, send the résumé as a portable document format (PDF) file that will preserve the fonts, images, graphics, and layout. You can attach this file to an e-mail message that will then serve as your **application cover letter**.

revision

When you revise your draft, read and evaluate it primarily from the point of view of your **audience**. In fact, revising requires a different frame of mind than **writing a draft**. To achieve that frame of mind, experienced writers have developed the following tactics:

R

- Allow a "cooling period" between writing the draft and revision in order to evaluate the draft objectively.
- Print your draft and mark up the paper copy; it is often difficult to revise on-screen.
- Read your draft aloud—often, hearing the text will enable you to spot problems that need improvement.
- Revise in passes by reading through your draft several times, each time searching for and correcting a different set of problems.

When you can no longer spot improvements, you may wish to give the draft to a colleague for review—especially for projects that are crucial

for you or your organization as well as for collaborative projects, as described in **collaborative writing**.

WRITER'S CHECKLIST **Revising Your Draft**

- ✔ COMPLETENESS. Does the document achieve its primary **purpose**? Will it fulfill the readers' needs? Your writing should give readers exactly what they need but not overwhelm them.
- ✔ APPROPRIATE INTRODUCTION AND CONCLUSION. Check to see that your **introduction** frames the rest of the document and that your **conclusion** ties the main ideas together. Both should account for revisions to the content of the document.
- ✔ ACCURACY. Look for any inaccuracies that may have crept into your draft.
- ✔ UNITY AND COHERENCE. Check to see that sentences and ideas are closely tied together (**coherence**) and contribute directly to the main idea expressed in the topic sentence of each **paragraph** (see **unity**). Provide **transitions** where they are missing and strengthen those that are weak.
- ✔ CONSISTENCY. Make sure that **layout and design**, **visuals**, and use of language are consistent. Do not call the same item by one term on one page and by a different term on another page.
- ✔ CONCISENESS. Tighten your writing so that it says exactly what you mean. Prune unnecessary words, phrases, sentences, and even paragraphs. See **conciseness**.
- ✔ AWKWARDNESS. Look for **awkwardness** in **sentence construction** — especially any **garbled sentences**.
- ✔ ETHICAL WRITING. Check for **ethics in writing** and eliminate **biased language**.
- ✔ ACTIVE VOICE. Use the active **voice** unless the passive voice is more appropriate.
- ✔ WORD CHOICE. Delete or replace **vague words** and unnecessary **intensifiers**. Check for **affectation** and unclear **pronoun references**. See also **word choice**.
- ✔ JARGON. If you have any doubt that all your readers will understand any **jargon** or special terms you have used, eliminate or define them.
- ✔ CLICHÉS. Replace **clichés** with fresh **figures of speech** or direct statements.

(*continued*)

WRITER'S CHECKLIST **Revising Your Draft** (*continued*)

- ✔ GRAMMAR. Check your draft for grammatical errors. Because grammar checkers are not always accurate, treat the recommendations only as *suggestions*.
- ✔ TYPOGRAPHICAL ERRORS. Check your final draft for typographical errors both with your spell checker and with thorough proofreading because spell checkers do not catch all errors.
- ✔ WORDY PHRASES. Use the search-and-replace command to find and revise wordy phrases, such as *that is*, *there are*, *the fact that*, and *to be*, and unnecessary helping verbs such as *will*.

DIGITAL TIP

Incorporating Tracked Changes

When colleagues review your document, they can "track" changes and insert comments within the document itself. Tracking and commenting vary with types and versions of word-processing programs, but in most programs you can view the document with all reviewers' edits and comments highlighted, or see the document as it would look if you accepted any changes made. For more advice on this topic, go to ***bedfordstmartins.com/alred*** and select *Digital Tips*, "Incorporating Tracked Changes."

rhetorical questions

R

A rhetorical question does not require a specific answer because it is intended to make an audience think about the subject from a different perspective. The writer or speaker then answers the question in an article or a presentation. The answer to a rhetorical question such as "Is space exploration worth the cost?" may not be a simple yes or no; it might be a detailed explanation of the pros and cons of the value of space exploration.

The rhetorical question can be used as an effective title or opening, especially in newsletter articles, brochures, presentations, or even blogs. However, it should be used judiciously in other, more-formal documents. A rhetorical question, for example, would not be appropriate for the title of a report or an e-mail addressed to a manager who needs to quickly understand the subject and purpose of the document or message.

run-on sentences

A run-on sentence, sometimes called a *fused sentence*, is two or more sentences without punctuation to separate them. The term is also sometimes applied to a pair of independent **clauses** separated by only a **comma**, although this variation is usually called a **comma splice**. See also **sentence construction** and **sentence faults**.

Run-on sentences can be corrected, as shown in the following examples, by (1) making two sentences, (2) joining the two clauses with a **semicolon** (if they are closely related), (3) joining the two clauses with a comma and a coordinating **conjunction**, or (4) subordinating one clause to the other.

- The client suggested several solutions ~~some~~ . Some are impractical. [1]
- The client suggested several solutions ; some are impractical. [2]
- The client suggested several solutions , but some are impractical. [3]
- The client suggested several solutions , although some are impractical. [4]

S

salary negotiations

Salary negotiations usually take place either at the end of a job interview or after a formal job offer has been made. If possible, delay discussing salary until after you receive a formal written job offer because you will have more negotiating leverage at that point. See also **job search**.

Before **interviewing for a job**, prepare for possible salary negotiations by researching the following:

- The current range of salaries for the work you hope to do at your level (entry? intermediate? advanced?) in your region of the country. Check trade journals and organizations in your field, or ask a reference librarian for help in finding this information. Job listings that include salary can also be helpful.
- Salaries made by last year's graduates from your college or university at your level and in your line of work. Your campus career-development office should have these figures.
- Salaries made by people you know at your level and in your line of work. Attend local organizational meetings in your field or contact officers of local organizations who might have this information or steer you to useful contacts.

If a potential employer requests your salary requirements with your **résumé**, consider your options carefully. If you provide a salary that is too high, the company might never interview you; if you provide a salary that is too low, you may have no opportunity later in the hiring process to negotiate for a higher salary. However, if you fail to follow the potential employer's directions and omit the requested information, an employer may disqualify you on principle. If you choose to provide salary requirements, always do so in a range (for example, $35,000 to $40,000). See also **application cover letters**.

If an interviewer asks your salary requirements toward the end of the job interview, you can try the following strategies to delay salary negotiations:

- Say something like, "I am sure that this company pays a fair salary for a person with my level of experience and qualifications" or "I am ready to consider your best offer."

- Indicate that you would like to learn more details about the position before discussing salary; point out that your primary goal is to work in a stimulating environment with growth potential, not to earn a specific salary.
- Express your strong interest in the position and the organization without referring to the salary.
- Reemphasize your unique qualifications (or combination of skills) for the job and what you can do for the company that other candidates cannot.

If the interviewer or company demands to know your salary requirements during a job interview, provide a wide salary range that you know would be reasonable for someone at your level in your line of work in that region of the country. For example, you could say, "I would hope for a salary somewhere between $35,000 and $45,000, but of course this is negotiable."

WEB LINK | **Salary Information Resources**

Some employers may ask for a salary history, a document that lists the starting and ending salaries for each position held. This form gives the employer an idea of how earnings have changed over the course of your employment history and what you hope to earn as a starting salary in your new position. For links to Web sites offering salary-history samples and useful resources for salary negotiations, see ***bedfordstmartins.com/alred*** and select *Links for Handbook Entries*.

Once salary negotiations begin, resist the temptation to immediately accept the first salary offer you receive. If you have done thorough **research**, you will know if the first salary offer is at the low, middle, or high end of the salary range for your level of experience in your line of work. If you have little or no experience and receive an offer for a salary at the low end of the range, you will realize that the offer probably is fair and reasonable. However, if you receive the same low-end offer but bring considerable experience to the job, you can negotiate for a higher salary that is more reasonable for someone with your background and credentials in your line of work in your region of the country.

Never say that you are unable to accept a salary below a particular figure. To keep negotiations going, simply indicate that you would have trouble accepting the first offer because it was lower than you had expected.

Remember that you are negotiating a package and not just a starting salary. For example, consider the value of a chance for an early promotion, thus a higher salary, within a few years or a particular job title or

special responsibilities that would provide you with impressive chances for career growth. If the starting salary seems low, consider negotiating for some of the following possible job perks, if they are not already provided:

- Tuition reimbursement for continued education
- Payment of relocation costs
- Paid personal leave or paid vacations
- Paid personal or sick days
- Overtime potential and compensation
- Flexible hours and work-from-home options
- Health, dental, optical or eye care, disability, and life insurance
- Retirement plans, such as 401(k) and pension plans
- Profit sharing; investment or stock options
- Bonuses or cost-of-living adjustments
- Commuting or parking-cost reimbursement
- Family leave
- Child-care or elder-care benefits
- Fitness or wellness benefits
- Discounts on company products and services

You might find it most comfortable to respond to an initial offer in writing and then meet later with the potential employer for further negotiation. If possible, indicate all your preferences and requirements at one time instead of continually asking for new and different benefits as you negotiate. Throughout this process, focus on what is most important to you (which might differ from what is most important to your friends) and on what you would find acceptable and comfortable.

scope

Scope is the depth and breadth of detail you include in a document as defined by your audience's needs, your **purpose**, and the **context**. (See also **audience**.) For example, if you write a **trip report** about a routine visit to a company facility, your readers may need to know only the basic details and any unusual findings. However, if you prepare a trip report about a visit to a division that has experienced problems and your purpose is to suggest ways to solve those problems, your report will contain many more details, observations, and even recommendations.

You should determine the scope of a document during the **preparation** stage of the writing process, even though you may refine it later. Defining your scope will expedite your **research** and can help determine team members' responsibilities in **collaborative writing**.

Your scope will also be affected by the type of document you are writing as well as the medium you select for your message. For example, funding organizations often prescribe the general content and length for **grant proposals**, and some organizations set limits for the length of **memos** and **e-mails**. See **selecting the medium** and "Five Steps to Successful Writing" on page xv.

selecting the medium

With so many media and forms of communication available, selecting the most appropriate medium can be challenging. Which electronic or paper medium (or *channel*) is best depends on a wide range of factors related to your **audience**, your **purpose**, and the **context** of the communication. Those factors include the following:

- The audience's preferences and expectations
- Your own most effective communication style
- How widely information needs to be distributed
- What kind of record you need to keep
- The urgency of the communication
- The sensitivity or confidentiality required
- The technological resources available
- The organizational practices or regulations

As this list suggests, choosing the best medium may involve personal considerations or the essential functions of the medium. If you need to collaborate with someone to solve a problem, for example, you may find e-mail exchanges less effective than a phone call or face-to-face meeting. If you need precise wording or a record of a complex or sensitive message, however, using a written medium is often essential.

Keep in mind that many of the following media and forms of communication evolve and overlap as technology develops. Understanding their basic functions will help you select the most appropriate medium for your needs. See **adapting to new technologies** for advice on how to learn and make the best use of new technologies as they continue to evolve.

E-mail

E-mail (or *email*) functions in the workplace as a primary medium to communicate and share electronic files with colleagues, clients, and customers. Although e-mail may function as informal notes, e-mail

messages should follow the writing strategy and style described in **correspondence**. Because recipients can easily forward messages and attachments to others and because e-mail messages are subject to legal disclosure, e-mail requires writers to review their messages carefully before clicking the "Send" button.

Memos

Memos are appropriate for internal communication among members of the same organization; they use a standard header and are sent on paper or as attachments to e-mails. Organizations may use memos printed on organizational stationery when they need to communicate with the formality and authority of business letters. Memos may also be used in manufacturing or service industries, for example, where employees do not have easy access to e-mail. In such cases, memos can be used to instruct employees, announce policies, report results, disseminate information, and delegate responsibilities.

Letters

Business **letters** with handwritten signatures are often the most appropriate choice for formal communications with professional associates or customers outside an organization. Letters printed on organizational letterhead stationery communicate formality, respect, and authority. They may be especially effective for those people who receive a high volume of e-mail and other electronic correspondence. Letters are often used for job applications, for recommendations, and in other official and social contexts.

Faxes

A fax is used when the information—a drawing or signed contract, for example—must be viewed in its original form. Although scanning such documents and attaching them to e-mail is common, faxing is often used when scanning is not available or when a recipient prefers a faxed document. Fax machines in offices can be located in shared areas, so let the intended recipient know before you send confidential or sensitive messages. Consider using a cover sheet that says "confidential" and be sure to include the name of the person to whose attention the fax is being sent and number of pages in the document to ensure full receipt.

Instant Messaging

Instant messaging (IM) on a computer or handheld device may be an efficient way to communicate in real time with coworkers, suppliers, and customers—especially those at sites without access to e-mail. In-

stant messaging, like **text messaging**, often uses online slang and such shortened spellings as "u" for *you* to save time and screen space. Instant messaging may have limited application in the workplace because recipients must be ready and willing to participate in an online conversation. For ethical and security issues for both text and instant messaging, see pages 267–68.

Text Messaging

Text messaging, or *texting*, refers to the exchange of brief written messages between mobile phones over cellular networks. Text messaging is effective for simple messages communicated between people on the move or in nontraditional workplaces. For the real-time message exchanges of brief messages, use the telephone or instant messaging.

Telephone and Conference Calls

Telephone calls are best used for exchanges that require substantial interaction and the ability of participants to interpret each other's tone of voice. They are useful for discussing sensitive issues and resolving misunderstandings, although they do not provide the visual cues possible during face-to-face meetings. Cell (or *mobile*) phones are useful for communicating away from an office, but users should follow appropriate etiquette and organizational policies, such as speaking in an appropriate tone and turning off the phone or switching it to the vibration mode during meetings.

A teleconference, or *conference call*, among three or more participants is a less-expensive alternative to face-to-face meetings requiring travel. Conference calls work best when the person coordinating the call works from an agenda shared by all the participants and directs the discussion as if chairing a meeting. Participants can use the Web during conference calls to share and view common documents. Conference calls in which decisions have been reached should be followed with written confirmation.

Voice-Mail Messages

Voice-mail messages should be clear and brief. ("I got your package, so you don't need to call the distributor.") If the message is complicated or contains numerous details, use another medium, such as e-mail. If you want to discuss a subject at length, let the recipient know the subject so that he or she can prepare a response before returning your call. When you leave a message, give your name and contact information as well as the date and time of the call (if you are unsure whether the message will be time-stamped).

Face-to-Face Meetings

In-person **meetings** are most appropriate for initial or early contacts with associates and clients with whom you intend to develop an important, long-term relationship or need to establish rapport. Meetings may also be best for brainstorming, negotiating, interviewing someone on a complex topic, solving a technical problem, or handling a controversial issue. For advice on how to record discussions and decisions, see **minutes of meetings**.

Videoconferences

Videoconferences are particularly useful for meetings when travel is impractical. Unlike telephone conference calls, videoconferences have the advantage of allowing participants to see as well as to hear one another. They work best with participants who are at ease in front of the camera and when the facilities offer good production quality.

Web Communication

The Web can encompass many of the media and forms of communication described in this entry; it can also include some other interactive capabilities.

Web Conferencing. The Web can be used to conduct meetings, which are often referred to as Web conferences. In such meetings, the participants' computers may be connected to those of other participants through a downloaded application on each of the attendees' computers. In such a conference, a moderator can control the cursor on the participants' computers. Various programs, like Skype with video or phone connections, can enrich these meetings.

Professional Networking. Using the model of social-networking sites, like Facebook.com, some professional organizations and businesses are creating their own networking sites to foster professional contacts. Other commercial networks, like LinkedIn.com, aim to connect professionals for business purposes. Many businesses place advertising on both professional and social-networking sites—and, if used with caution, both may be helpful for your professional advancement and **job search**.

Web-Site Postings. A public Internet or company intranet Web site is ideal for posting announcements or policies as well as for sharing or exchanging documents and files with others. Your Web site can serve

not only as a home base for resources but also as a place where ideas can be developed through, for example, discussion boards, **blogs and forums**, and wikis. See also **collaborative writing**, **writing for the Web**, and *Digital Tip: Using Collaborative Software* on page 75.

DIGITAL TIP

Synchronizing Information

If you use multiple computers (for instance, one at your office and one at home) to work on the same files, synchronizing the data on all of your computers can save you time and eliminate the hassle of e-mailing or copying files from one computer to another. You can also synchronize data between your computer(s) and your mobile devices, which allows you access to your e-mail, contacts, and calendars when you are away from your computer. Numerous "cloud computing" (or off-site) applications offer free or inexpensive accounts for keeping your most important data synchronized. For a list of these applications and a comparison of their features, see ***bedfordstmartins.com/alred*** and select *Digital Tips*, "Synchronizing Information."

semicolons

The semicolon (;) links independent **clauses** or other sentence elements of equal weight and grammatical rank when they are not joined by a **comma** and a **conjunction**. The semicolon indicates a greater pause between clauses than does a comma but not as great a pause as a **period**.

Independent clauses joined by a semicolon should balance or contrast with each other, and the relationship between the two statements should be so clear that further explanation is not necessary.

- The new Web site was a success; every division reported increased online sales.

Do not use a semicolon between a dependent clause and its main clause.

- No one applied for the position; even though it was heavily advertised.

S

With Strong Connectives

In complicated sentences, a semicolon may be used before transitional words or **phrases** (*that is*, *for example*, *namely*) that introduce examples or further explanation. See also **transition**.

- The press understands Commissioner Curran's position on the issue*;* *that is*, local funds should not be used for the highway project.

A semicolon should also be used before conjunctive **adverbs** (*therefore*, *moreover*, *consequently*, *furthermore*, *indeed*, *in fact*, *however*) that connect independent clauses.

- The test results are not complete*;* *therefore*, I cannot make a recommendation.
  [The semicolon in the example shows that *therefore* belongs to the second clause.]

For Clarity in Long Sentences

Use a semicolon between two independent clauses connected by a coordinating conjunction (*and*, *but*, *for*, *or*, *nor*, *so*, *yet*) if the clauses are long and contain other **punctuation**.

- In most cases, these individuals are executives, bankers, or lawyers*;* *but* they do not, as the press seems to believe, simply push the button of their economic power to affect local politics.

A semicolon may also be used if any items in a series contain commas.

- Among those present were John Howard, president of the Omega Paper Company*;* Carol Delgado, president of Environex Corporation*;* and Larry Stanley, president of Stanley Papers.

Use **parentheses** or **dashes**, not semicolons, to enclose a parenthetical element that contains commas.

- All affected job classifications *(*receptionist, secretary, transcriptionist, and clerk*)* will be upgraded this month.

Use a **colon**, not a semicolon, as a mark of anticipation or enumeration.

- Three decontamination methods are under consideration*;* a zeolite-resin system, an evaporation system, and a filtration system.

The semicolon always appears outside closing **quotation marks**.

- The attorney said, "You must be accurate"*;* her client replied, "I will."

sentence construction

DIRECTORY

Subjects 521
Predicates 522
Sentence Types 523
  Structure 523
  Intention 524
  Stylistic Use 524
Constructing Effective Sentences 524

A sentence is the most fundamental and versatile tool available to writers. Sentences generally flow from a subject to a **verb** to any **objects**, **complements**, or **modifiers**, but they can be ordered in a variety of ways to achieve **emphasis**. When shifting word order for emphasis, however, be aware that word order can make a great difference in the meaning of a sentence.

- He was *only* the service technician. [suggests importance]
- He was the *only* service technician. [defines the number]

The most basic components of sentences are subjects and predicates.

Subjects

The *subject* of a sentence is a **noun** or **pronoun** (and its modifiers) about which the predicate of the sentence makes a statement. Although a subject may appear anywhere in a sentence, it most often appears at the beginning. ("*The wiring* is defective.") Grammatically, a subject must agree with its verb in **number**.

- *These departments have* much in common.
- *This department has* several functions.

The subject is the actor in sentences using the active **voice**.

- *The Webmaster reported* an increase in site visits for May.

A *compound subject* has two or more substantives (nouns or noun equivalents) as the subject of one verb.

- *The doctor* and *the nurse* agreed on a treatment plan.

ESL TIPS for Understanding the Subject of a Sentence

In English, every sentence, except commands, must have an explicit subject.

- *Paul* worked fast. ~~Established~~ *He established* the parameters for the project.

In commands, the subject *you* is understood and is used only for emphasis.

- (*You*) Meet me at the airport at 6:30 tomorrow morning.
- (*You*) Do your homework, young man. [parent to child]

If you move the subject from its normal position (subject-verb-object), English often requires you to replace the subject with an expletive (*there*, *it*). In this construction, the verb agrees with the subject that follows it.

- *There are* two files on the desk.
  [The subject is *files*.]
- *It is* presumptuous for me to speak for Jim.
  [The subject is *to speak for Jim*.]

Time, distance, weather, temperature, and environmental expressions use *it* as their subject.

- *It* is ten o'clock.
- *It* is ten miles down the road.
- *It* seldom snows in Florida.
- *It* is very hot in Jorge's office.

S

Predicates

The *predicate* is the part of a sentence that makes an assertion about the subject and completes the thought of the sentence.

- Bill *has piloted the corporate jet*.

The *simple predicate* is the verb and any helping verbs (*has piloted*). The *complete predicate* is the verb and any modifiers, objects, or complements (*has piloted the corporate jet*). A *compound predicate* consists of two or more verbs with the same subject.

- The company *tried* but *did not succeed* in that field.

Such constructions help achieve **conciseness** in writing. A *predicate nominative* is a noun construction that follows a linking verb and renames the subject.

- She is my *attorney*. [noun]
- His excuse was *that he had been sick*. [noun clause]

Sentence Types

Sentences may be classified according to *structure* (simple, compound, complex, compound-complex); *intention* (declarative, interrogative, imperative, exclamatory); and *stylistic use* (loose, periodic, minor).

Structure. A *simple sentence* consists of one independent clause. At its most basic, a simple sentence contains only a subject and a predicate.

- The power [subject] failed [predicate].

A *compound sentence* consists of two or more independent clauses connected by a comma and a coordinating **conjunction**, by a **semicolon**, or by a semicolon and a conjunctive **adverb**.

- Drilling is the only way to collect samples of the layers of sediment below the ocean floor, *but* it is not the only way to gather information about these strata. [comma and coordinating conjunction]
- The chemical composition of seawater bears little resemblance to that of river water*;* the various elements are present in entirely different proportions. [semicolon]
- It was 500 miles to the site*; therefore*, we made arrangements to fly. [semicolon and conjunctive adverb]

A *complex sentence* contains one independent clause and at least one dependent clause that expresses a subordinate idea.

- The generator will shut off automatically [independent clause] if the temperature rises above a specified point [dependent clause].

A *compound-complex sentence* consists of two or more independent clauses plus at least one dependent clause.

- Productivity is central to controlling inflation [independent clause]; when productivity rises [dependent clause], employers can raise wages without raising prices [independent clause].

Intention. A *declarative sentence* conveys information or makes a factual statement. ("The motor powers the conveyor belt.") An *interrogative sentence* asks a direct question. ("Does the conveyor belt run constantly?") An *imperative sentence* issues a command. ("Restart in SAFE mode.") An *exclamatory sentence* is an emphatic expression of feeling, fact, or opinion. It is a declarative sentence that is stated with great feeling. ("The files were deleted!")

Stylistic Use. A *loose sentence* makes its major point at the beginning and then adds subordinate phrases and clauses that develop or modify that major point. A loose sentence could end at one or more points before it actually does end, as the periods in brackets illustrate in the following sentence:

- It went up[.], a great ball of fire about a mile in diameter[.], an elemental force freed from its bonds[.] after being chained for billions of years.

A *periodic sentence* delays its main ideas until the end by presenting subordinate ideas or modifiers first.

- During the last century, the attitude of the American citizen toward automation underwent a profound change.

A *minor sentence* is an incomplete sentence that makes sense in its context because the missing element is clearly implied by the preceding sentence.

- In view of these facts, is the service contract really useful? *Or economical?*

Constructing Effective Sentences

The subject-verb-object pattern is effective because it is most familiar to **readers**. In "The company increased profits," we know the subject (*company*) and the object (*profits*) by their positions relative to the verb (*increased*).

An *inverted sentence* places the elements in unexpected order, thus emphasizing the point by attracting the readers' attention.

- A better job I never had. [direct object-subject-verb]
- More optimistic I have never been. [subjective complement-subject-linking verb]
- A poor image we presented. [direct object-subject-verb]

Use uncomplicated sentences to state complex ideas. If readers have to cope with a complicated sentence in addition to a complex idea, they are likely to become confused. Just as simpler sentences make complex ideas more digestible, a complex sentence construction makes a series of simple ideas smoother and less choppy.

Avoid loading sentences with a number of thoughts carelessly tacked together. Such sentences are monotonous and hard to read because all the ideas seem to be of equal importance. Rather, distinguish the relative importance of sentence elements with **subordination**. See also **garbled sentences**.

LOADED We started the program three years ago, only three members were on staff, and each member was responsible for a separate state, but it was not an efficient operation.

IMPROVED When we started the program three years ago, only three members were on staff, each responsible for a separate state; however, that arrangement was not efficient.

Express coordinate or equivalent ideas in similar form. The structure of the sentence helps readers grasp the similarity of its components, as illustrated in **parallel structure**.

ESL TIPS for Understanding the Requirements of a Sentence

- A sentence must start with a capital letter.
- A sentence must end with a period, a question mark, or an exclamation mark.
- A sentence must have a subject.
- A sentence must have a verb.
- A sentence must conform to subject-verb-object word order (or inverted word order for questions or emphasis).
- A sentence must express an idea that can stand on its own (called the *main*, or *independent*, *clause*).

sentence faults

A number of problems can create sentence faults, including faulty **subordination**, **clauses** with no subjects, rambling sentences, omitted **verbs**, and illogical assertions.

Faulty subordination occurs when a grammatically subordinate element contains the main idea of the sentence or when a subordinate element is so long or detailed that it obscures the main idea. Both of the following sentences are logical, depending on what the writer intends as the main idea and as the subordinate element.

- Although the new filing system saves money, many of the staff are unhappy with it.
  [If the main point is that *many of the staff are unhappy*, this sentence is correct.]
- The new filing system saves money, although many of the staff are unhappy with it.
  [If the main point is that *the new filing system saves money*, this sentence is correct.]

In the following example, the subordinate element overwhelms the main point.

FAULTY	Because the noise level in the assembly area on a typical shift is as loud as a smoke detector's alarm ten feet away, employees often develop hearing problems.
IMPROVED	Employees in the assembly area often develop hearing problems because the noise level on a typical shift is as loud as a smoke detector's alarm ten feet away.

Missing subjects occur when writers inappropriately assume a subject that they do not state in the clause. See also **sentence fragments**.

S

INCOMPLETE	Your application program can request to end the session after the next command. [Your application program can request *who* or *what* to end the session?]
COMPLETE	Your application program can request *the host program* to end the session after the next command.

Rambling sentences contain more information than the reader can comfortably absorb. The obvious remedy for a rambling sentence is to divide it into two or more sentences. (See also **run-on sentences**.) When you do that, put the main message of the rambling sentence into the first of the revised sentences.

RAMBLING The payment to which a subcontractor is entitled should be made promptly in order that in the event of a subsequent contractual dispute we, as general contractors, may not be held in default of our contract by virtue of nonpayment.

DIRECT Pay subcontractors promptly. Then if a contractual dispute occurs, we cannot be held in default of our contract because of nonpayment.

Missing verbs produce some sentence faults.

written
▶ I never have and probably never will write the annual report.

Faulty logic results when a predicate makes an illogical assertion about its subject. "Mr. Wilson's *job* is a sales representative" is not logical, but "*Mr. Wilson* is a sales representative" is logical. "Jim's *height* is six feet tall" is not logical, but "*Jim* is six feet tall" is logical. See also **logic errors**.

sentence fragments

A sentence fragment is an incomplete grammatical unit that is punctuated as a sentence.

FRAGMENT And quit his job.

SENTENCE He quit his job.

A sentence fragment lacks either a subject or a **verb** or is a subordinate **clause** or **phrase**. Sentence fragments are often introduced by relative **pronouns** (*who*, *whom*, *which*, *that*) or subordinating **conjunctions** (such as *although*, *because*, *if*, *when*, and *while*).

, although
▶ The new manager instituted several new procedures. ~~Although~~ she didn't clear them with Human Resources.

A sentence must contain a finite verb; **verbals** (nonfinite) do not function as verbs. The following sentence fragments use verbals (*providing*, *to work*) that cannot function as finite verbs.

FRAGMENT *Providing* all employees with disability insurance.

SENTENCE The company *provides* all employees with disability insurance.

FRAGMENT *To work* a 40-hour week.

SENTENCE Most of our employees *must work* a 40-hour week.

Explanatory phrases beginning with *such as*, *for example*, and similar terms often lead writers to create sentence fragments.

- The staff wants additional benefits~~. For example,~~ , such as the use of company cars.

A hopelessly snarled fragment simply must be rewritten. To rewrite such a fragment, pull the main points out of the fragment, list them in the proper sequence, and then rewrite the sentence as illustrated in **garbled sentences**. See also **sentence construction** and **sentence faults**.

sentence variety

Sentences can vary in length, structure, and complexity. As you revise, vary your sentences so that they do not become tiresomely alike. See also **sentence construction**.

Sentence Length

A series of sentences of the same length is monotonous, so varying sentence length makes writing less tedious to the **reader**. For example, avoid stringing together a number of short independent **clauses**. Either connect them with subordinating connectives, thereby making some dependent clauses, or make some clauses into separate sentences.

STRING	The river is 63 miles long, and it averages 50 yards in width, and its depth averages 8 feet.
IMPROVED	The river, which is 63 miles long and averages 50 yards in width, has an average depth of 8 feet.
IMPROVED	The river is 63 miles long. It averages 50 yards in width and 8 feet in depth.

You can often effectively combine short sentences by converting **verbs** into **adjectives**.

- The digital shift indicator ~~failed. It~~ failed was pulled from the market.

Although too many short sentences make your writing sound choppy and immature, a short sentence can be effective following a long one.

- During the past two decades, many changes have occurred in American life—the extent, durability, and significance of which no one has yet measured. *No one can.*

In general, short sentences are good for emphatic, memorable statements. Long sentences are good for detailed explanations and support. Nothing is inherently wrong with a long sentence, or even with a complicated one, as long as its meaning is clear and direct. Sentence length becomes an element of style when varied for **emphasis** or contrast; a conspicuously short or long sentence can be used to good effect.

Word Order

When a series of sentences all begin in exactly the same way (usually with an **article** and a **noun**), the result is likely to be monotonous. You can make your sentences more interesting by occasionally starting with a modifying word, **phrase**, or clause.

- *To salvage the project*, she presented alternatives when existing policies failed to produce results. [modifying phrase]

However, overuse of this technique can itself be monotonous, so use it in moderation.

Inverted word order can be an effective way to achieve variety, but be careful not to create an awkward construction.

AWKWARD So good sales have never been.

EFFECTIVE Never have sales been so good.

For variety, you can alter normal sentence order by inserting a phrase or clause.

- Titanium fills the gap, *both in weight and in strength*, between aluminum and steel.

The technique of inserting a phrase or clause is good for achieving emphasis, providing detail, breaking monotony, and regulating **pace**.

Loose and Periodic Sentences

A loose sentence makes its major point at the beginning and then adds subordinate phrases and clauses that develop or modify the point. A loose sentence could end at one or more points before it actually ends, as the periods in brackets illustrate in the following example:

- It went up[.], a great ball of fire about a mile in diameter[.], an elemental force freed from its bonds[.] after being chained for billions of years.

A periodic sentence delays its main idea until the end by presenting modifiers or subordinate ideas first, thus holding the readers' interest until the end.

- During the last century, the attitude of Americans toward technology underwent a profound change.

Experiment with shifts from loose sentences to periodic sentences in your own writing, especially during **revision**. Avoid the monotony of a long series of loose sentences, particularly a series containing coordinate clauses joined by **conjunctions**. Using **subordination** not only provides emphasis but also makes your sentences more interesting.

sequential method of development

The sequential, or *step-by-step*, **method of development** is especially effective for explaining a process or describing a mechanism in operation. (See **process explanation**.) It is also the logical method for writing **instructions**, as shown in Figure I–5 on page 271.

The main advantage of the sequential method of development is that it is easy to follow because the steps correspond to the process or operation being described. The disadvantages are that it can become monotonous and does not lend itself well to achieving **emphasis**.

Most methods of development have elements of sequence to a greater or lesser extent. The **chronological method of development**, for example, is also sequential: To describe a trip chronologically, from beginning to end, is also to describe it sequentially. The **cause-and-effect method of development** may contain certain elements of sequence. For example, a report of the causes leading to an accident (the effect) might describe those causes in the order they occurred (or their sequence).

service

When used as a **verb**, *service* means "keep up or maintain" as well as "repair." ("Our company will *service* your equipment.") If you mean "provide a more general benefit," use *serve*.

- Our company ~~services~~ *serves* the northwest area of the state.

set / sit

Sit is an intransitive **verb**; it does not, therefore, require an **object**. ("I *sit* by a window in the office.") Its past **tense** is *sat*. ("We *sat* around the conference table.") *Set* is usually a transitive verb, meaning "put or place," "establish," or "harden." Its past tense is *set*.

- Please *set* the supplies on the shelf.
- The jeweler *set* the stone carefully.
- Can we *set* a date for the meeting?
- The high temperature *sets* the epoxy quickly.

Set is occasionally an intransitive verb.

- The new adhesive *sets* in five minutes.

shall / will

Although traditionally *shall* was used to express the future **tense** with *I* and *we*, *will* is generally accepted with all persons. *Shall* is commonly used today only in questions requesting an opinion or a preference ("*Shall* we go?") rather than a prediction ("*Will* we go?"). It is also used in statements expressing determination ("I *shall* return!") or in formal regulations that express a requirement ("Applicants *shall* provide a proof of certification").

slashes

The slash (/)—also called *slant line*, *diagonal*, *virgule*, *bar*, and *solidus* — both separates and shows omission. The slash can indicate alternatives or combinations.

- David's telephone numbers are (800) 549-2278/2235.
- Check the on/off switch before you leave.

The slash often indicates omitted words and letters.

- miles/hour (miles per hour); w/o (without)

In fractions and mathematical expressions, the slash separates the numerator from the denominator (3/4 for three-fourths; *x*/*y* for *x* over *y*).

Although the slash is used informally with **dates** (*5/9/12*), avoid this form in technical writing, especially in **international correspondence**.

The forward slash often separates items in URL (uniform resource locator) addresses for sites on the Internet (*bedfordstmartins.com/alred*). The backward slash is used to separate parts of file names (*c:\myfiles\reports\annual12.doc*).

so / so that / such

Avoid *so* as a substitute for *because*. See also **as / because / since**.

- Because she
  ~~She~~ reads faster, ~~so~~ she finished before I did.

Do not replace the phrase *so that* with *so* or *such that*.

- so that
  The report should be written ~~such that~~ it can be widely understood.

Such, an **adjective** meaning "of this or that kind," should never be used as a **pronoun**.

- Our company provides on-site child care, but I do not anticipate using it.
  ~~such.~~

some / somewhat

When *some* functions as an indefinite **pronoun** for a plural count **noun** or as an indefinite **adjective** modifying a plural count noun, use a plural **verb**.

- *Some* of us *are* prepared to work overtime.
- *Some* people *are* more productive than others.

Some is singular, however, when used with mass nouns.

- *Some* sand *has* trickled through the crack.

When *some* is used as an adjective or a pronoun meaning "an undetermined quantity" or "certain unspecified persons," it should be replaced by the **adverb** *somewhat*, which means "to some extent."

- somewhat.
  His writing has improved ~~some.~~

some time / sometime / sometimes

Some time refers to a duration of time. ("We waited for *some time* before making the decision.") *Sometime* refers to an unknown or unspecified time. ("We will visit with you *sometime*.") *Sometimes* refers to occasional occurrences at unspecified times. ("He *sometimes* visits the branch offices.")

spatial method of development

The spatial **method of development** describes an object or a process according to the physical arrangement of its features. Depending on the subject, you describe its features from bottom to top, side to side, east to west, outside to inside, and so on. Descriptions of this kind

DESCRIPTION

Interior of Two-Story, Six-Room House

Ground Floor

Front hall and stairwell. The front door faces south and opens into a hallway seven feet deep and ten feet wide. At the end of the hallway is a stairwell that begins on the right-hand (east) side of the hallway, rises five steps to a landing, and reverses direction at the left-hand (west) side of the hallway.

Dining room. To the left (west) of the hallway is the dining room, which measures 15 feet along its southern exposure and ten feet along its western exposure.

Kitchen. North of the dining room is the kitchen, which measures ten feet along its western exposure and 15 feet along its northern exposure.

Bathroom. East of the kitchen, along the northern side of the house, is a bathroom that measures ten feet (west to east) by five feet.

Living room. Parallel to the bathroom is a passageway the same size as the bathroom and leading from the kitchen to the living room. The living room (15 feet west to east by 20 feet north to south) occupies the entire eastern end of the floor.

Second Floor

Hallway. On the second floor, at the top of the stairs, is an L-shaped hallway, five feet wide. The base of the L, over the door, is 15 feet long. The vertical arm of the L is 13 feet long.

Southwest bedroom. To the west of the hall is the southwest bedroom, which measures ten feet along its southern exposure and eight feet along its western exposure.

Northwest bedroom. Directly to the north, over the kitchen, is the northwest bedroom, which measures 12 feet along its western exposure and ten feet along its northern exposure.

FIGURE S–1. Spatial Method of Development

rely mainly on dimension (height, width, length), direction (up, down, north, south), shape (rectangular, square, semicircular), and proportion (one-half, two-thirds). Features are described in relation to one another or to their surroundings, as illustrated in Figure S–1 on page 533, which might be written by a home inspector or crime-scene investigator. The description in Figure S–1 relies on a bottom-to-top, clockwise (south to west to north to east) sequence, beginning with the front door. Such descriptions often benefit from **visuals**, such as **drawings**, that can provide overviews and details.

The spatial method of development might be used for descriptions of warehouse inventory, **proposals** for landscape work, construction-site **progress and activity reports**, and, in combination with a step-by-step sequence, many types of **instructions**.

specifications

A specification is a detailed and an exact statement that prescribes the materials, dimensions, and quality of something to be built, installed, or manufactured.

The two broad categories of specifications—industrial and government—both require precision. A specification must be written clearly and precisely and state *explicitly* what is needed. Because of the stringent requirements of specifications, careful **research** and **preparation** are especially important before you begin to write, as is careful **revision** after you have completed the draft. See also **ambiguity**, **clarity**, and **plain language**.

Industrial Specifications

Industrial specifications are used, for example, in software development, in which there are no engineering drawings or other means of documentation. An industrial specification is a permanent record that documents the item being developed so that it can be maintained by someone other than the person who designed it and provides detailed technical information about the item to all who need it (engineers, technical writers, technical instructors, etc.).

The industrial specification describes a planned project, a newly completed project, or an old project. The specification for each type of project must contain detailed technical descriptions of all aspects of the project: what was done and how it was done, as well as what is required to use the item, how it is used, what its function is, who would use it, and so on.

WEB LINK	Sample Specifications
For an example of a commercial specification, see ***bedfordstmartins.com/alred***, *Model Documents Gallery*, and select "Request for Proposal" in the *Proposals* link.	

Government Specifications

Government agencies are required by law to contract for equipment strictly according to definitions provided in formal specifications. A government specification is a precise definition of exactly what the contractor is to provide. In addition to a technical description of the item to be purchased, the specification normally includes an estimated cost; an estimated delivery date; and standards for the design, manufacture, quality, testing, training of government employees, governing codes, inspection, and delivery of the item.

Government specifications contain details on the scope of the project; documents the contractor is required to furnish with the device; required product characteristics and functional performance of the device; required tests, test equipment, and test procedures; required preparations for delivery; notes; and **appendixes**. These specifications appear in **requests for proposals**, which prescribe the content and deadline for **grant proposals** submitted by vendors bidding on a project.

spelling

Because spelling errors in your documents can confuse readers and damage your credibility, careful **proofreading** is essential. The use of a spell checker is crucial; however, it will not catch all mistakes, especially those in personal and company names. It cannot detect a spelling error if the error results in a valid word; for example, if you mean *to* but inadvertently type *too*, the spell checker will not detect the error. If you are unsure about the spelling of a word, do not rely on guesswork or a spell checker—consult a print or an online **dictionary**.

strata / stratum

Strata is the plural form of *stratum*, meaning "a layer of material."

- The land's *strata* are exposed by erosion.
- Each *stratum* is clearly visible in the cliff.

style

A dictionary definition of *style* is "the way in which something is said or done, as distinguished from its substance." Writers' styles are determined by the way writers think and transfer their thoughts to paper—the way they use words, sentences, images, **figures of speech**, and so on.

A writer's style is the way his or her language functions in particular situations. For example, an **e-mail** to a friend would be relaxed, even chatty, in **tone**, whereas a job **application cover letter** would be more restrained and formal. Obviously, the style appropriate to one situation would not be appropriate to the other. In both situations, the **audience**, the **purpose**, and the **context** determine the manner or style the writer adopts. Beyond an individual's personal style, various kinds of writing have distinct stylistic traits, such as **technical writing style**.

Standard English can be divided into two broad categories of style—formal and informal—according to how it functions in certain situations. Understanding the distinction between formal and informal writing styles helps writers use the appropriate style. We must recognize, however, that no clear-cut line divides the two categories and that some writing may call for a combination of the two. See also **English, varieties of**.

Formal Writing Style

A formal writing style can perhaps best be defined by pointing to certain material that is clearly formal, such as scholarly and scientific articles in professional journals, lectures read at meetings of professional societies, and legal documents. Material written in a formal style is usually the work of a specialist writing to other specialists or writing that embodies laws or regulations. As a result, the vocabulary is specialized and precise. The writer's tone is impersonal and objective because the subject matter looms larger in the writing than does the author's personality. (See **point of view**.) A formal writing style does not use **contractions**, slang, or dialect. Because the material generally examines complex ideas, the **sentence construction** may be elaborate.

Formal writing need not be dull and lifeless. By using such techniques as the active **voice** whenever possible, **sentence variety**, and **subordination**, a writer can make formal writing lively and interesting, especially if the subject matter is inherently interesting to **readers**. In the following example, a physicist uses a concept that is taken for granted (distance) to show how definitions are important in science.

- Distance is such a basic concept in our understanding of the world that it is easy to underestimate the depth of its subtlety. With

> the surprising effects that special and general relativity have had on our notions of space and time, and the new features arising from string theory, we are led to be a bit more careful even in our definition of distance. The most meaningful definitions in physics are those that are operational—that is, definitions that provide a means, at least in principle, for measuring whatever is being defined. After all, no matter how abstract a concept is, having an operational definition allows us to boil down its meaning to an experimental procedure for measuring its value.
>
> —Brian Greene, *The Elegant Universe: Superstrings, Hidden Dimensions, and the Quest for the Ultimate Theory*

Whether you should use a formal style in a particular instance depends on your readers and purpose. When writers attempt to force a formal style when it should not be used, their writing is likely to fall victim to **affectation**, **awkwardness**, and **gobbledygook**.

Informal Writing Style

An informal writing style is a relaxed and colloquial way of writing standard English. It is the style found in most personal e-mail and in some business **correspondence**, nonfiction books of general interest, and mass-circulation magazines. There is less distance between the writer and the reader because the tone is more personal than in a formal writing style. Consider the following passage, written in an informal style, from a nonfiction book on statistics.

> ▶ After a few months of reading risk statistics, I had a curious experience one morning, an epiphany of sorts. At the time, however, I felt more like Alice in Wonderland after taking a sip of the "Drink Me" potion. When I opened my eyes in bed and began to contemplate my day, I began to see it not in terms of what I had to accomplish but in terms of the risks that I would encounter. The world suddenly started looking different.
>
> —John F. Ross, *The Polar Bear Strategy: Reflections on Risk in Modern Life*

As the example illustrates, the vocabulary of an informal writing style is made up of generally familiar rather than unfamiliar words and expressions, although slang and dialect are usually avoided. An informal style approximates the cadence and structure of spoken English while conforming to the grammatical conventions of written English.

PROFESSIONALISM NOTE Writers who consciously attempt to create a distinctive style usually defeat their purpose. Attempting to impress readers with a flashy writing style can lead to affectation; attempting to impress them with scientific objectivity can produce a style that is

dull and lifeless. Technical writing need be neither affected nor dull. It can and should be simple, clear, direct, even interesting—the key is to master basic writing skills and always to keep your readers in mind. What will be both informative and interesting to your readers? When that question is uppermost in your mind as you apply the steps of the writing process, you will achieve an interesting and informative writing style. See "Five Steps to Successful Writing" on page xv.

WRITER'S CHECKLIST **Developing an Effective Style**

- ✔ Use the active voice — not exclusively but as much as possible without becoming awkward or illogical.
- ✔ Use **parallel structure** whenever a sentence or **list** presents two or more thoughts of equal importance.
- ✔ Vary sentence structure to avoid a monotonous style.
- ✔ Avoid stating positive thoughts in negative terms (write "40 percent responded" instead of "60 percent failed to respond"). See also **ethics in writing**, **plain language**, and **positive writing**.
- ✔ Concentrate on achieving the proper balance between **emphasis** and subordination.

WEB LINK **Style Guides**

Style guides, such as *The Chicago Manual of Style* and the Associated Press *Stylebook and Briefing on Media Law*, provide specific and sometimes varied advice for handling issues of usage, style, and formats for citations, correspondence, and documents. For a selected list of such style guides, see ***bedfordstmartins.com/alred*** and select *Links for Handbook Entries*.

subordination

Use subordination to show, by the structure of a sentence, the appropriate relationship between ideas of unequal importance. Subordination allows you to emphasize your main idea by putting less-important ideas in subordinate **clauses** or **phrases**.

- Envirex Systems now employs 500 people. It was founded just three years ago.
  [The two ideas are equally important.]
- Envirex Systems, *which now employs 500 people*, was founded just three years ago.
  [The number of employees is subordinated; the founding date is emphasized.]
- Envirex Systems, *which was founded just three years ago*, now employs 500 people.
  [The founding date is subordinated; the number of employees is emphasized.]

Effective subordination can be used to achieve **conciseness**, **emphasis**, and **sentence variety**. For example, consider the following sentences.

DEPENDENT CLAUSE	The research report, *which covered 86 pages*, was carefully documented.
PHRASE	The research report, *covering 86 pages*, was carefully documented.
SINGLE MODIFIER	The *86-page* research report was carefully documented.

Subordinating **conjunctions** (*because*, *if*, *while*, *when*, *although*) achieve subordination effectively.

- A buildup of deposits is impossible *because* the pipes are flushed with water every day.

You may use a coordinating conjunction (*and*, *but*, *for*, *nor*, *or*, *so*, *yet*) to concede that an opposite or balancing fact is true; however, a subordinating conjunction can often make the point more smoothly.

- *Although* their lab is well funded, ours is better equipped for DNA testing.

The relationship between a conditional statement and a statement of consequences is clearer if the condition is expressed as a subordinate clause.

- *Because* the tests were delayed, the surgery was postponed.

Relative **pronouns** (*who*, *whom*, *which*, *that*) can be used effectively to combine related ideas within sentences.

- OnlinePro, *which* protects computers from malicious programs, makes your system "invisible" to hackers.

Avoid overlapping subordinate constructions that depend on the preceding construction. Overlapping can make the relationship between a relative pronoun and its antecedent less clear.

OVERLAPPING	Shock, *which* often accompanies severe injuries and infections, is a failure of the circulation, *which* is marked by a fall in blood pressure *that* initially affects the skin (*which* explains pallor) and later the vital organs such as the kidneys and brain.
CLEAR	Shock often accompanies severe injuries and infections. Marked by a fall in blood pressure, it is a failure of the circulation, initially to the skin (thus producing pallor) and later to the vital organs like the kidneys and the brain.

suffixes

A suffix is a letter or letters added to the end of a word to change its meaning in some way. Suffixes can change the part of speech of a word.

NO SUFFIX	The proposal was *thorough*. [**adjective**]
SUFFIX	The *thoroughness* is obvious. [**noun**]
SUFFIX	The proposal *thoroughly* described the problem. [**adverb**]

The suffix *-like* is sometimes added to nouns to make them into adjectives. The resulting compound word is hyphenated only if it is unusual or might not immediately be clear (childlike, lifelike, *but* dictionary-like, Einstein-like). See **hyphens**.

S

surveys (*see* questionnaires)

synonyms

A synonym is a word that means nearly the same thing as another word does (*seller*, *vendor*, *supplier*). The dictionary definitions of synonyms are similar, but the connotations may differ. For example, a *seller* may be the same thing as a *supplier*, but the word *supplier* does not suggest a retail transaction as strongly as *seller* does.

Do not try to impress your **readers** by finding fancy or obscure synonyms in a **thesaurus**; the result is likely to be **affectation**. See also **connotation / denotation** and **antonyms**.

syntax

Syntax refers to the way words, phrases, and clauses are combined to form sentences. In English, the most common structure is the subject-verb-object pattern. For more information about the word order of sentences, see **sentence construction**, **sentence faults**, **sentence fragments**, and **sentence variety**.

T

tables of contents

A table of contents is typically included in a document longer than ten pages. It previews what the work contains and how it is organized, and it allows **readers** looking for specific information to locate sections by page number quickly and easily.

When creating a table of contents, use the major **headings** and subheadings of your document exactly as they appear in the text, as shown in the entry **formal reports**. (See the table of contents in Figure F–5 on page 207.) The table of contents is placed in the front matter following the title page and **abstract**, and precedes the list of tables or figures, the foreword, and the preface.

tables

A table organizes numerical and verbal data into parallel rows and columns that allow **readers** to make precise item-to-item comparisons. Overall trends, however, are more easily conveyed in **graphs** and other **visuals**.

Table Elements

Tables typically include the elements shown in Figure T–1.

Table Number. Table numbers should be placed above tables and assigned sequentially throughout the document.

Table Title. The title (or *caption*), which is normally placed just above the table, should describe concisely what the table represents.

Box Head. The box head contains the column headings, which should be brief but descriptive. Units of measurement should be either specified as part of the heading or enclosed in parentheses beneath it. Standard **abbreviations** and symbols are acceptable. Avoid vertical or diagonal lettering.

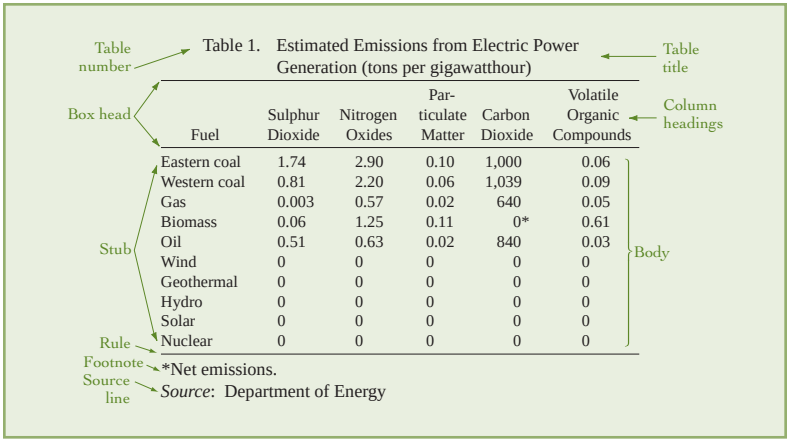


FIGURE T–1. Elements of a Table

Stub. The stub, the left vertical column of a table, lists the items about which information is given in the body of the table.

Body. The body comprises the data below the column headings and to the right of the stub. Within the body, arrange columns so that the items to be compared appear in adjacent rows and columns. Align the numerical data in columns for ease of comparison, as shown in Figure T–1. Where no information exists for a specific item, substitute a row of dots or a dash to acknowledge the gap.

Rules. Rules are the lines (or *borders*) that separate the table into its various parts. Tables should include top and bottom borders. Tables often include right and left borders, although they may be open at the sides, as shown in Figure T–1. Generally, include a horizontal rule between the column headings and the body of the table. Separate the columns with vertical rules within a table only when they aid clarity.

Footnotes. Footnotes are used for explanations of individual items in the table. Symbols (such as * and †) or lowercase letters (sometimes in parentheses) rather than numbers are ordinarily used to key table footnotes because numbers might be mistaken for numerical data or could be confused with the numbering system for text footnotes. See also **documenting sources**.

Source Line. The source line identifies where the data originated. When a source line is appropriate, it appears below the table. Many

The sound-intensity levels (decibels) for the three frequency bands (in hertz) were determined to be the following:

Frequency Band (Hz)	*Decibels*
600–1199	68
1200–2399	62
2400–4800	53

FIGURE T–2. Informal Table

organizations place the source line below the footnotes. See also **copyright** and **plagiarism**.

Continuing Tables. When a table must be divided so that it can be continued on another page, repeat the column headings and the table number and title on the new page with a "continued" label (for example, "Table 3. [title], *continued*").

Informal Tables

To list relatively few items that would be easier for the reader to grasp in tabular form, you can use an informal table, as long as you introduce it properly. Although informal tables do not need titles or table numbers to identify them, they do require column headings that accurately describe the information listed, as shown in Figure T–2.

technical manuals (*see* manuals)

technical writing style

The goal of technical writing is to enable **readers** to use a technology or understand a process or concept. Because the subject matter is more important than the writer's voice, technical writing style uses an objective, not a subjective, **tone**. The writing **style** is direct and utilitarian, emphasizing exactness and **clarity** rather than elegance or allusiveness. A technical writer uses figurative language only when a **figure of speech** would facilitate understanding.

Technical writing is often—but not always—aimed at readers who are not experts in the subject, such as consumers or employees learning to operate unfamiliar equipment. Because such **audiences** are inexperienced and the procedures described may involve hazardous material or equipment, clarity becomes an ethical as well as a stylistic concern. (See also **ethics in writing**.) Figure T–3 is an excerpt from a technical **manual** that instructs eye-care specialists about operating testing equipment. As the figure illustrates, **visuals** as well as **layout and design** enhance clarity, providing the reader with both text and visual information.

Technical writing style uses a technical vocabulary appropriate for the reader, as Figure T–3 shows (*monocular electrode*, *saccade*), but it avoids **affectation**. Good technical writing also avoids overusing the passive **voice**. See also **instructions**, **organization**, **plain language**, and **process explanation**.

MONOCULAR RECORDING

A monocular electrode configuration might be useful to measure the horizontal eye movement of each eye separately. This configuration is commonly used during the voluntary saccade tests.

1. Place electrodes at the inner canthi of both eyes (**A and B**, Figure 51).
2. Place electrodes at the outer canthi of both eyes (**C and D**).
3. Place the last electrode anywhere on the forehead (**E**).
4. Plug the electrodes into the jacks described in Figure 52 on the following page.

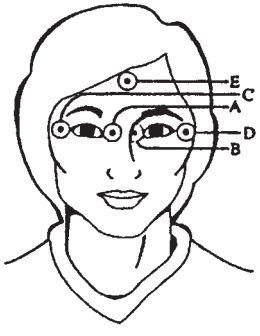


Figure 51

With this configuration, the Channel A display moves upward when the patient's left eye moves nasally and moves downward when the patient's left eye moves temporally. The Channel B display moves upward when the patient's right eye moves temporally and moves downward when the patient's right eye moves nasally.

NOTE: *During all testing, the Nystar Plus identifies and eliminates eye blinks without vertical electrode recordings.*

Figure T–3. Technical Writing Style

telegraphic style

Telegraphic style condenses writing by omitting **articles**, **pronouns**, **conjunctions**, and **transitions**. Although **conciseness** is important, especially in **instructions**, writers sometimes try to achieve conciseness by omitting necessary words and thus producing misunderstandings. Compare the following two passages and notice how much easier the revised version reads (the added words are italicized).

TELEGRAPHIC	Take following action when treating serious burns. Remove loose clothing on or near burn. Cover injury with clean dressing and wash area around burn. Secure dressing with tape. Separate fingers/toes with gauze/cloth to prevent sticking. Do not apply medication unless doctor prescribes.
CLEAR	Take *the* following action when treating *a* serious burn. Remove *any* loose clothing on or near *the* burn. Cover *the* injury with *a* clean dressing and wash *the* area around *the* burn. *Then* secure *the* dressing with tape. Separate *the* fingers *or* toes with gauze *or* cloth to prevent *them from* sticking *together*. Do not apply medication unless *a* doctor prescribes *it*.

Telegraphic style can also produce **ambiguity**, as the following example from a crane operator manual demonstrates.

AMBIGUOUS	Grasp knob and adjust lever before raising boom. [Does this sentence mean that the reader should *adjust the lever* or also *grasp an "adjust lever"*?]
CLEAR	Grasp *the* knob and adjust *the* lever before raising *the* boom.

◖ PROFESSIONALISM NOTE Although you may save yourself work by writing telegraphically, you may produce serious misunderstandings and your readers will have to work that much harder to decipher your meaning. Professional courtesy requires that you help your **reader**. ◗

T

tenant / tenet

A *tenant* is a person who holds or temporarily occupies a property owned by another person. ("The *tenant* was upset by the rent increase.") A *tenet* is an opinion or principle held by a person, an organization, or a system. ("Competition is a central *tenet* of capitalism.")

tense

DIRECTORY

Past Tense 547
Past Perfect Tense 548
Present Tense 548
Present Perfect Tense 548
Future Tense 548
Future Perfect Tense 548
Shift in Tense 549

Tense is the grammatical term for **verb** forms that indicate time distinctions. The six tenses in English are past, past perfect, present, present perfect, future, and future perfect. Each tense also has a corresponding progressive form.

TENSE	BASIC FORM	PROGRESSIVE FORM
Past	I began	I was beginning
Past perfect	I had begun	I had been beginning
Present	I begin	I am beginning
Present perfect	I have begun	I have been beginning
Future	I will begin	I will be beginning
Future perfect	I will have begun	I will have been beginning

Perfect tenses allow you to express a prior action or condition that continues in a present, past, or future time.

PRESENT PERFECT — I *have begun* to compile the survey results and will continue for the rest of the month.

PAST PERFECT — I *had begun* to read the manual when the fire alarm sounded.

FUTURE PERFECT — I *will have begun* this project by the time funds are allocated.

Progressive tenses allow you to describe some ongoing action or condition in the present, past, or future.

PRESENT PROGRESSIVE — I *am beginning* to be concerned that we will not meet the deadline.

PAST PROGRESSIVE — I *was beginning* to think we would not finish by the deadline.

FUTURE PROGRESSIVE — I *will be requesting* a leave of absence when this project is finished.

Past Tense

The simple past tense indicates that an action took place in its entirety in the past. The past tense is usually formed by adding *-d* or *-ed* to the root form of the verb. ("We *closed* the office early yesterday.")

Past Perfect Tense

The past perfect tense (also called *pluperfect*) indicates that one past event preceded another. It is formed by combining the helping verb *had* with the past-participle form of the main verb. ("He *had finished* by the time I arrived.")

Present Tense

The simple present tense represents action occurring in the present, without any indication of time duration. ("I *ride* the train.")

A general truth is always expressed in the present tense. ("Time *heals* all wounds.") The present tense can be used to present actions or conditions that have no time restrictions. ("Water *boils* at 212 degrees Fahrenheit.") Similarly, the present tense can be used to indicate habitual action. ("I *pass* the coffee shop every day.") The present tense is also used for the "historical present," as in newspaper headlines ("FDA *Approves* New Cancer Drug") or as in references to an author's opinion or a work's contents—even though it was written in the past.

- In her 1979 article, Carolyn Miller *argues* that technical writing possesses significant humanistic value.

Present Perfect Tense

The present perfect tense describes something from the recent past that has a bearing on the present—a period of time before the present but after the simple past. The present perfect tense is formed by combining a form of the helping verb *have* with the past-participle form of the main verb. ("We *have finished* the draft and can now revise it.")

Future Tense

The simple future tense indicates a time that will occur after the present. It uses the helping verb *will* (or *shall*) plus the main verb. ("I *will finish* the job tomorrow.") Do not use the future tense needlessly; doing so merely adds complexity.

- This system ~~will be~~ *is* explained on page 3.
- When you press this button, the hoist ~~will move~~ *moves* the plate into position.

Future Perfect Tense

The future perfect tense indicates action that will have been completed at the time of or before another future action. It combines *will have* and

the past participle of the main verb. ("She *will have driven* 1,400 miles by the time she returns.")

Shift in Tense

Be consistent in your use of tense. The only legitimate shift in tense records a real change in time. Illogical shifts in tense will only confuse your **readers**.

- Before he installed the circuit, the technician ~~cleans~~ *cleaned* the contacts.

ESL TIPS for Using the Progressive Form

The progressive form of the verb is composed of two features: a form of the helping verb *be* and the *-ing* form of the base verb.

PRESENT PROGRESSIVE	I *am updating* the Web site.
PAST PROGRESSIVE	I *was updating* the Web site last week.
FUTURE PROGRESSIVE	I *will be updating* the Web site regularly.

The present progressive is used in three ways:

1. To refer to an action that is in progress at the moment of speaking or writing:
   - The technician *is repairing* the copier.
2. To highlight that a state or an action is not permanent:
   - The office temp *is helping* us for a few weeks.
3. To express future plans:
   - The summer intern *is leaving* to return to school this Friday.

The past progressive is used to refer to a continuing action or condition in the past, usually with specified limits.

- I *was failing* calculus until I got a tutor.

The future progressive is used to refer to a continuous action or condition in the future.

- We *will be monitoring* his condition all night.

Verbs that express mental activity (*believe*, *know*, *see*, and so on) are generally not used in the progressive.

- I ~~am believing~~ *believe* the defendant's testimony.

test reports

Test reports are considerably smaller, less formal, and more routine than **laboratory reports**. The test report can be presented as a **memo** or a **letter**, depending on whether its recipient is inside or outside the organization. Either way, as in Figure T–4, the **report** should have a subject line at the beginning to identify the test being discussed. See also **correspondence**.

The opening of a test report should state the test's purpose, unless it is obvious from the subject line. The body of the report presents the data and, if relevant, describes procedures used to conduct the test. State the results of the test and, if necessary, interpret them. Conclude the report, if appropriate, with any recommendations made as a result of the test. Figure T–4 shows a report of tests required by a government agency to monitor asbestos in the air at a highway construction site.

text messaging

Text messaging, or *texting*, refers to the exchange of brief written messages between mobile phones over cellular networks. Text messaging is effective for simple messages communicated between people on the move or in nontraditional workplaces. Although text messaging is similar to **e-mail**, the screen and device size means that text messages are short. ("The client's backup servers are down.") Like e-mail, text messages can also include video and other digital files. Keep in mind that because texting can be less secure than other media, various policies often limit its use, especially in highly regulated industries like financial services. For the real-time exchange of brief messages, use the phone or **instant messaging**.

◖ PROFESSIONALISM NOTE Avoid using text messages to communicate complicated or vital information. The abbreviated format does not allow for the transmittal of complex or detailed information, and as the sender, you cannot always be certain the text message has been viewed or even received. ◗

that / which / who

Use *which*, not *that*, with nonrestrictive clauses (clauses that do not change the meaning of the basic sentence). See also **restrictive and nonrestrictive elements**.

Biospherics, Inc.

4928 Wyaconda Road
Rockville, MD 20852

Phone: 301-598-9011
Fax: 301-598-9570

September 11, 2012

Safety Committee
The Angle Company, Inc.
1869 Slauson Boulevard
Waynesville, VA 23927

Subject: Monitoring Airborne Asbestos at the Route 66 Site

On August 28, Biospherics, Inc., performed asbestos-in-air monitoring at your Route 66 construction site, near Front Royal, Virginia. Six people and three construction areas were monitored.

Methodology
All monitoring and analyses were performed in accordance with "Occupational Exposure to Asbestos," U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Public Health Service, National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health, 2011. Each worker or area was fitted with a battery-powered personal sampler pump operating at a flow rate of approximately two liters per minute. The airborne asbestos was collected on a 37 mm Millipore-type AA filter mounted in an open-face filter holder. Samples were collected over an 8-hour period.

Conclusions
In all cases, the workers and areas monitored were exposed to levels of asbestos fibers well below the standard set by OSHA. The highest exposure found was that of a driller exposed to 0.21 fibers per cubic centimeter. The driller's sample was analyzed by scanning electron microscopy followed by energy-dispersive X-ray techniques that identify the chemical nature of each fiber, to identify the fibers as asbestos or other fiber types. Results from these analyses show that the fibers present were tremolite asbestos. No nonasbestos fibers were found.

If you need more details, please let me know.

Yours truly,

Gary Geirelach

Gary Geirelach
Chemist
gg2@Bios.org

FIGURE T–4. Test Report

NONRESTRICTIVE	After John left the law firm, *which* is the largest in the region, he started a private practice.
RESTRICTIVE	Companies *that* diversify usually succeed.

That and *which* should refer to animals and things; *who* should refer to people. See also **who / whom**.

- Dr. Cynthia Winter, *who* recently joined the clinic, treated a dog *that* was severely burned.

The word *that* is often overused and can foster wordiness.

- When I think that when this project is finished, I think that you should publish the results.

However, include *that* in a sentence if it avoids **ambiguity** or improves the **pace**. See also **conciseness**.

- Some designers fail to appreciate that the workers who operate equipment constitute an important safety system.

there / their / they're

There is an **expletive** (a word that fills the position of another word, phrase, or clause) or an **adverb**.

EXPLETIVE	*There* were more than 1,500 people at the conference.
ADVERB	More than 1,500 people were *there*.

Their is the **possessive case** form of *they*. ("Managers check *their* e-mail regularly.") *They're* is a **contraction** of *they are*. ("Clients tell us *they're* pleased with our services.")

thesaurus

A thesaurus lists **synonyms** and **antonyms** that are arranged alphabetically or retrievable by categories. Thoughtfully used, a thesaurus can help you with **word choice** during the **revision** phase of the writing process. However, the variety of words it offers may tempt you to choose

an inappropriate word for the **context** or to use an obscure synonym. Do not use a thesaurus to impress your **readers**. (See also **affectation**.) Never use a word unless you are sure of its meanings; its **connotations** might be unknown to you and could mislead your readers.

titles

Titles are important because many **readers** use them to decide whether to read documents, such as **e-mails**, **memos**, **reports**, and **newsletter articles**. Titles are also crucial for filing and retrieving documents. This entry discusses both creating titles and referring to them in your writing. For advice on titles for figures and tables, see **visuals**.

Reports and Long Documents

Titles for reports, **proposals**, articles, and similar documents should identify the document's topic, reflect its **tone**, and indicate its **scope** and **purpose** as in the following title of an academic article.

- "Effects of 60-Hertz Electric Fields on Embryo Chick Development, Growth, and Behavior"

Such titles should be concise but not so short that they are not specific. For example, the title "Electric Fields and Living Organisms" announces the topic and might be appropriate for a book, but it does not answer important questions that readers of an article would expect, such as "What is the relationship between electric fields and living organisms?" and "What aspects of the organisms are related to electric fields?"

Avoid titles with such redundancies as "Notes on," "Studies on," or "A Report on." However, works like annual reports or **feasibility reports** should be identified as such in the title because this information specifies the purpose and scope of the report. For titles of **progress and activity reports**, indicate the dates in a subtitle ("Quarterly Report on Hospital Admission Rates: January–March 2012"). Avoid using technical shorthand, such as chemical formulas, and other **abbreviations** in your title unless the work is addressed exclusively to specialists in the field. For multivolume publications, repeat the title on each volume and include the subtitle and number of each volume.

Titles should not use the sentence form, except for titles of articles in **newsletters** and magazines that ask a **rhetorical question**.

- "Is Online Learning Right for You?"

Memos, E-mail, and Internet Postings

Subject lines of memos, e-mails, and Internet postings function as titles and should concisely and accurately describe the topic of the message. Because recipients often use subject-line titles to prioritize and sort their **correspondence**, such titles must be specific.

VAGUE	Subject: Tuition Reimbursement
SPECIFIC	Subject: Tuition Reimbursement for Time-Management Seminar

Although the title in the subject line announces your topic, you should still develop an opening that provides **context** for the message.

Formatting Titles

Capitalization. Capitalize the initial letters of the first and last words of a title as well as all major words in the title. Do not capitalize articles (*a*, *an*, *the*), coordinating conjunctions (*and*, *but*), or short prepositions (*at*, *in*, *on*, *of*) unless they begin or end the title (*The Lives of a Cell*). Capitalize prepositions in titles if they contain five or more letters (*Between*, *Since*, *Until*, *After*), unless you are following a style that recommends otherwise.

Italics. Use **italics** or underlining when referring to titles of separately published works, such as books, periodicals, newspapers, pamphlets, brochures, legal cases, movies, television programs, and Web sites.

- *Turning Workplace Conflict into Collaboration* [book] by Joyce Richards was reviewed in the *New York Times* [newspaper].
- We will include a link to *The Weather Channel* (*www.weather.com*).

Abbreviations of such titles are italicized if their spelled-out forms would be italicized.

- *NEJM* stands for the *New England Journal of Medicine*.

Italicize the titles of compact and digital video discs, videotapes, plays, long poems, paintings, sculptures, and long musical works.

CD-ROM	*Computer Security Tutorial* (CD-ROM edition)
PLAY	Arthur Miller's *Death of a Salesman*
LONG POEM	T. S. Eliot's *The Wasteland*
PAINTING	M. C. Escher's *Drawing Hands*
SCULPTURE	Auguste Rodin's *The Thinker*
MUSICAL WORK	Gershwin's *Porgy and Bess*

Quotation Marks. Use **quotation marks** when referring to parts of publications, such as chapters of books and articles or sections within periodicals.

- Her chapter titled "Effects of Government Regulations on Motorcycle Safety" in the book *Government Regulation and the Economy* was cited in a recent article, "No-Fault Insurance and Motorcycles," published in *American Motorcyclist* magazine.

Titles of reports, essays, short poems, short musical works (including songs), short stories, and single episodes of radio and television programs are also enclosed in quotation marks.

REPORT	"Analysis of Ethics Cases at CGF Corporation"
ESSAY	Ralph Waldo Emerson's "The American Scholar"
SHORT POEM	Robert Frost's "The Road Not Taken"
SONG	Bob Dylan's "Like a Rolling Stone"
SHORT STORY	Nathaniel Hawthorne's "The Birthmark"
TV PROGRAM	"In Depth: Ray Kurzweil" on C-Span (episode of *In Depth*)

Special Cases. Some titles, by convention, are not set off by quotation marks, underlining, or italics. Such titles follow standard practice for capitalization and the practice of the organization.

- Technical Writing [college course title], Old Testament, Magna Carta, the Constitution, Lincoln's Gettysburg Address, the Lands' End Catalog

For citing titles in references and works cited, see **documenting sources**.

to / too / two

To, *too*, and *two* are frequently confused because they sound alike. *To* is used as a **preposition** or to mark an infinitive. See **verbs**.

- Send the report *to* the district manager. [preposition]
- I do not wish *to* attend. [mark of the infinitive]

Too is an **adverb** meaning "excessively" or "also."

- The price was *too* high. [excessively]
- I, *too*, thought it was high. [also]

Two is a **number** (*two* buildings, *two* concepts).

tone

Tone is the attitude a writer expresses toward the subject and his or her readers. In workplace writing, tone may range widely—depending on the **purpose**, situation, **context**, **audience**, and even the medium of a communication. For example, in an **e-mail** message to be read only by an associate who is also a friend, your tone might be casual.

- Your proposal to Smith and Kline is super. We'll just need to hammer out the schedule. If we get the contract, I owe you lunch!

In a message to your manager or superior, however, your tone might be more formal and respectful.

- I think your proposal to Smith and Kline is excellent. I have marked a couple of places where I'm concerned that we are committing ourselves to a schedule that we might not be able to keep. If I can help in any other way, please let me know.

In a message that serves as a **report** to numerous readers, the tone would be professional, without the more personal **style** that you would use with an individual reader.

- The Smith and Kline proposal appears complete and thorough, based on our department's evaluation. Several small revisions, however, would ensure that the company is not committing itself to an unrealistic schedule. These revisions are marked on the copy of the report attached to this message.

The **word choice**, the **introduction**, and even the **title** contribute to the overall tone of your document. For instance, a title such as "Ecological Consequences of Diminishing Water Resources in California" clearly sets a different tone from "What Happens When We've Drained California Dry?" The first title would be appropriate for a report; the second title would be more appropriate for a popular magazine or **newsletter article**. See also **correspondence** and **technical writing style**.

trade journal articles

DIRECTORY

Planning the Article 557
Gathering the Data 558
Organizing the Draft 558
Preparing Sections of the Article 559
Abstract 559
Introduction 559

Conclusion 559
Visuals and Tables 559
Headings 560
References 560
Preparing the Manuscript 560
Obtaining Publication Clearance 560

Trade journal articles are written for professional periodicals that aim to further the knowledge in a field among specialists in that field. (See **audience**.) Such periodicals, commonly known as trade journals (or professional or scholarly journals), are often the official publications of professional societies. *Technical Communication*, for example, is an official voice of the Society for Technical Communication. Other professional publications include *IEEE Transactions on Communications*, *Chemical Engineering*, *Nucleonics Week*, and hundreds of others. Professional staff people, such as engineers, scientists, educators, and legal professionals, regularly contribute articles to trade journals.

Writing a trade journal article in your field can make your work more widely known, provide publicity for your employer, contribute to your profession, and even improve your chances for professional advancement.

Planning the Article

When you are thinking about writing an article for a trade journal, consider the following questions:

- Is your work or your knowledge of the subject original? If not, what is there about your approach that justifies publication?
- Will the significance of the article justify the time and effort needed to write it?
- What parts of your work, project, or study are most appropriate to include in the article?

To help you answer those questions, learn as much as possible about the periodical or periodicals to which you plan to submit an article and consult your colleagues for advice. Once you have decided on several journals, consider the following factors about each one:

- The professional interests and size of its readership
- The professional reputation of the journal
- The appropriateness of your article to the journal's goals, as stated on its masthead page or in a mission statement on its Web site
- The frequency with which its articles are cited in other journals

Next, read back issues of the journal or journals to find out information such as the amount and kind of details that the articles include, the length of the articles, and the typical writing **style**. (See also **context**.)

If your subject involves a particular project, begin work on your article when the project is in progress. That allows you to write the draft in manageable increments and record the details of the project while they are fresh in your mind. It also makes the writing integral to the project and may even reveal any weaknesses in the design or details, such as the need for more data.

As you plan your article, decide whether to invite one or more coauthors to join you. Doing so can add strength and substance to an article. However, as with all **collaborative writing**, you should establish a schedule, assign tasks, and designate a primary author to ensure that the finished article reads smoothly.

Gathering the Data

As you gather information, take notes from all the sources of primary and secondary **research** available to you. Begin your research with a careful review of the literature to establish what has been published about your topic. A review of the relevant information in your field can be insurance against writing an article that has already been published. (Some articles, in fact, begin with a **literature review**.) As you compile that information, record your references in full; include all the information you need to document the source. See also **documenting sources**.

❖ ETHICS NOTE As you are researching your article, plan to submit a copy to your employer for review before sending it to the journal. A review will ensure that you have not inadvertently revealed any proprietary information. In a college environment, you will need to seek assistance from an institutional review board (IRB) if you plan to use research based on gathering data from people as research subjects. Likewise, secure permission ahead of time to print information for which someone else holds the **copyright**. See also **plagiarism**. ❖

Organizing the Draft

Some trade journals use a prescribed **organization** for the major sections. The following organization is common in scientific journals: introduction, materials and methods, results, discussion, and sources cited. Look closely at several issues of the journals that you target to determine how those or other sections are developed. If the major organization is not prescribed, choose and arrange the various sections of the draft in a way that shows your results to best advantage.

The best guarantee of a logically organized article is a good outline. (See **outlining**.) If you have coauthors, work from a common, well-developed outline to coordinate the various writers' work and make sure the parts fit together logically.

Preparing Sections of the Article

As you prepare an article, pay particular attention to a number of key sections and elements: the **abstract**, the **introduction**, the **conclusion**, **visuals** and **tables**, **headings**, and references.

Abstract. Although the abstract will appear at the beginning of the article, write it only after you have finished writing the body of the manuscript. Follow any instructions provided by the journal on writing abstracts and review those previously published in that journal. Prepare your abstract carefully—it will be the basis on which other researchers decide whether to read your article in full. Abstracts are often published independently and are a source of terms (called *keywords*) used to index, by subject, the original article for computerized information-retrieval systems.

Introduction. The introduction should discuss these aspects of the article:

- The **purpose** of the article
- A definition of the problem examined
- The **scope** of the article
- The methodology or rationale for your approach to the problem or project and the reasons you rejected alternative approaches
- Previous work in the field, including other approaches described in previously published articles

Above all, your introduction should emphasize what is new and different about your approach, especially if you are not dealing with a new concept. It should also demonstrate the overall significance of your project or approach by explaining how it fills a need, solves a current problem, or offers a useful application.

Conclusion. The conclusion pulls together your results and interprets them in relation to the purpose of your study and the methods used to conduct it. Your conclusion must grow from the evidence for the findings in the body of the article.

Visuals and Tables. Used effectively and appropriately, visuals can clarify information and reinforce the point you are making in the article. Design each visual for a specific purpose: to describe a function, to show an external appearance, to show internal construction, to display statistical data, or to indicate trends.

Headings. Headings are important because they identify topics and break the text into manageable portions. They also allow journal readers to understand the development of your topic and pinpoint sections of particular interest to them. Check the use of headings when you review back issues of the journal.

References. The references section (often titled "Works Cited") of the article lists the sources you used in the article. The specific format for listing sources varies from field to field. Usually the journal to which you submit an article will specify the form the editors require for citing sources. For a detailed discussion of using and citing sources, see **documenting sources** and **quotations**.

Preparing the Manuscript

Trade journals often recommend a particular style guide, such as *The Chicago Manual of Style*, and most provide detailed guidelines on style and format at the journal's Web site. Such style guides often include specific instructions about how to format the manuscript, how many copies to submit, and how to handle **abbreviations**, symbols, **mathematical equations**, and the like. The following guidelines are typical.

- Double-space the manuscript, leaving one-inch margins all around, and number each page.
- Provide specific, accurate, and self-explanatory captions for all figures and tables. Add call-outs (labels) to those illustrations that need them.
- Provide clear and accurately worded labels for drawings and other illustrations.
- Place any mathematical or chemical equations on separate lines in the text and number them consecutively.
- Check with the editor about the format, file type, or other special requirements for **photographs** or scanned images.

Obtaining Publication Clearance

After you have finalized your article, submit a copy to your employer for review before sending it to the journal. A review will ensure that you have not inadvertently revealed any proprietary information. Likewise, secure permission ahead of time to print information for which someone else holds the copyright. See also **plagiarism**.

transition

Transition is the means of achieving a smooth flow of ideas from sentence to sentence, **paragraph** to paragraph, and subject to subject. Transition is a two-way indicator of what has been said and what will be said; it provides **readers** with guideposts for linking ideas and clarifying the relationship between them.

Transition can be obvious.

- *Having considered* the technical problems outlined in this proposal, *we move next* to the question of adequate staffing.

Transition can be subtle.

- *Even if* technical problems could be solved, there *still remains* the issue of adequate staffing.

Either way, you now have your readers' attention fastened on the problem of adequate staffing, exactly what you set out to do.

Methods of Transition

Transition can be achieved in many ways: (1) using transitional words and phrases, (2) repeating keywords or key ideas, (3) using **pronouns** with clear antecedents, (4) using enumeration (1, 2, 3, or first, second, third), (5) summarizing a previous paragraph, (6) asking a question, and (7) using a transitional paragraph.

Certain words and phrases are inherently transitional. Consider the following terms and their functions:

FUNCTION	TERMS
Result	therefore, as a result, consequently, thus, hence
Example	for example, for instance, specifically, as an illustration
Comparison	similarly, likewise, in comparison
Contrast	but, yet, still, however, nevertheless, on the other hand
Addition	moreover, furthermore, also, too, besides, in addition
Time	now, later, meanwhile, since then, after that, before that time
Sequence	first, second, third, initially, then, next, finally

Within a paragraph, such transitional expressions clarify and smooth the movement from idea to idea. Conversely, the lack of transitional devices can make for disjointed reading. See also **telegraphic style**.

Transition Between Sentences

You can achieve effective transition between sentences by repeating keywords or key ideas from preceding sentences and by using pronouns

that refer to antecedents in previous sentences. Consider the following short paragraph, which uses both of those means.

- Representative of many American university towns is Middletown. *This midwestern town*, formerly *a sleepy farming community*, is today the home of a large and vibrant *academic community*. Attracting students from all over the Midwest, *this university town* has grown very rapidly in the last ten years.

Enumeration is another device for achieving transition.

- The recommendation rests on *two conditions*. *First*, the department staff must be expanded to handle the increased workload. *Second*, sufficient time must be provided for training the new staff.

Transition Between Paragraphs

The means discussed so far for achieving transition between sentences can also be effective for achieving transition between paragraphs. For paragraphs, however, longer transitional elements are often required. One technique is to use an opening sentence that summarizes the preceding paragraph and then moves on to a new paragraph.

- One property of material considered for manufacturing processes is hardness. Hardness is the internal resistance of the material to the forcing apart or closing together of its molecules. Another property is ductility, the characteristic of material that permits it to be drawn into a wire. Material also may possess malleability, the property that makes it capable of being rolled or hammered into thin sheets of various shapes. Purchasing managers must consider these properties before selecting manufacturing materials for use in production.

  The requirements of hardness, ductility, and malleability account for the high cost of such materials. . . .

Another technique is to ask a question at the end of one paragraph and answer it at the beginning of the next.

- New technology has always been feared because it has at times displaced some jobs. However, it invariably creates many more jobs than it eliminates. Almost always, the jobs eliminated by technological advances have been menial, unskilled jobs, and workers who have been displaced have been forced to increase their skills, which resulted in better and higher-paying jobs for them. *In view of this history, should we now uncritically embrace new technology?*

  Certainly technology has given us unparalleled access to information and created many new roles for employees. . . .

A purely transitional paragraph may be inserted to aid readability.

- The problem of poor management was a key factor that caused the weak performance of the company.

  Two other setbacks to the company's fortunes also marked the company's decline: the loss of many skilled workers through the early retirement program and the increased rate of employee turnover.

  The early retirement program resulted in engineering staff . . .

If you provide logical **organization** and have prepared an outline, your transitional needs will easily be satisfied and your writing will have **unity** and **coherence**. During **revision**, look for places where transition is missing and add it. Look for places where it is weak and strengthen it.

trip reports

A trip report provides a permanent record of a business trip and its accomplishments. It provides managers with essential information about the results of the trip and can enable other staff members to benefit from the information. See also **reports**.

A trip report is normally written as a **memo** or an **e-mail** and addressed to an immediate superior, as shown in Figure T–5. The subject line identifies the destination and dates of the trip. The body of the report explains why you made the trip, whom you visited, and what you accomplished. The report should devote a brief section to each major activity and may include a **heading** for each section. You need not give equal space to each activity—instead, elaborate on the more important ones. Follow the body of the report with the appropriate **conclusions** and recommendations. Finally, if required, attach a record of expenses to the trip report.

trouble reports

The trouble report is used to analyze such events as accidents, equipment failures, or health emergencies. For example, the report shown in Figure T–6 describes a workplace accident involving personal injury. The report assesses the causes of the problem and suggests changes necessary to prevent its recurrence. Because it is usually an internal document, the trouble report normally follows the **memo** format.

In the subject line of the memo, state the precise problem you are reporting. In the body of the report, provide a detailed, precise description

From: James D. Kerson <jdkerson@psys.com>
To: Roberto Camacho <rcamacho@psys.com>
Sent: Wed, 11 Jan 2012 12:16:30 EST
Subject: Trip to Smith Electric Co., Huntington, West Virginia, January 5–6, 2012
Attachments: Expense Report.xls (25 KB)

I visited the Smith Electric Company in Huntington, West Virginia, to determine the cause of a recurring failure in a Model 247 printer.

Problem
The printer stopped printing periodically for no apparent reason. Repeated efforts to bring it back online eventually succeeded, but the problem recurred at irregular intervals. Neither customer personnel operating the printer nor the local maintenance specialist was able to solve the problem.

Action
On January 5, I met with Ms. Ruth Bernardi, the office manager, who explained the problem. My troubleshooting did not reveal the cause of the problem then or on January 6.

Only when I tested the logic cable did I find that it contained a broken wire. I replaced the logic cable and then ran all the normal printer test patterns to make sure no other problems existed. All patterns were positive, so I turned the printer over to the customer.

Conclusion
There are over 12,000 of these printers in the field, and to my knowledge this is the first occurrence of a bad cable. I believe the logic cable problem found at Smith Electric Company reflects the recurring failures during 2011.

==========
James D. Kerson, Product Analyst
Printer Systems, Inc.
1366 Federal St., Allentown, PA 18101
(610) 747-9955 Fax: (610) 747-9956
jdkerson@psys.com
www.psys.com
==========

FIGURE T–5. Trip Report Sent as E-mail (with Attachment)

of the problem. What happened? Where and when did the problem occur? Was anybody hurt? Was there any property damage? Was there a work stoppage?

In your **conclusion**, state what has been or will be done to correct the conditions that led to the problem. That may include, for example, recommendations for training in safety practices, using improved equipment, and wearing protective clothing. See also **reports**.

Consolidated Energy, Inc.

To: Marvin Lundquist, Vice President
Administrative Services

From: Kalo Katarlan, Safety Officer KK
Field Service Operations

Date: August 20, 2012

Subject: Field Service Employee Accident on August 6, 2012

The following is an initial report of an accident that occurred on Monday, August 6, 2012, involving John Markley, and that resulted in two days of lost time.

Accident Summary
John Markley stopped by a rewiring job on German Road. Chico Ruiz was working there, stringing new wire, and John was checking with Chico about the materials he wanted for framing a pole. Some tree trimming had been done in the area, and John offered to help remove some of the debris by loading it into the pickup truck he was driving. While John was loading branches into the bed of the truck, a piece broke off in his right hand and struck his right eye.

Accident Details
1. John's right eye was struck by a piece of tree branch. John had just undergone laser surgery on his right eye on Friday, August 3, to reattach his retina.
2. John immediately covered his right eye with his hand, and Chico Ruiz gave him a paper towel with ice to cover his eye and help ease the pain.

7. On Thursday, August 9, John returned to his eye surgeon. Although bruised, his eye was not damaged, and the surgically reattached retina was still in place.

Recommendations
To prevent a recurrence of such an accident, the Safety Department will require the following actions in the future:

- When working around and moving debris such as tree limbs or branches, all service crew employees must wear safety eyewear with side shields.
- All service crew employees must always consider the possibility of shock for an injured employee. If crew members cannot leave the job site to care for the injured employee, someone on the crew must call for assistance from the Service Center. The Service Center phone number is printed in each service crew member's handbook.

FIGURE T–6. Trouble Report (Using Printed Memo)

❖ ETHICS NOTE Because insurance claims, workers' compensation awards, and even lawsuits may hinge on the information contained in a trouble report, be sure to include precise times, dates, locations, treatment of injuries, names of any witnesses, and any other crucial information. (Notice the careful use of language and factual detail in Figure T–6.) Be thorough and accurate in your analysis of the problem and support any judgments or conclusions with facts. Be objective: Always use a neutral **tone** and avoid assigning blame. If you speculate about the cause of the problem, make it clear to your **readers** that you are speculating. See also **ethics in writing**. ❖

try to

The phrase *try and* is colloquial for *try to*. For technical writing, use *try to*.

- Please try ~~and~~ *to* finish the report by next week.

U

unity

Unity is singleness of **purpose** and focus; a unified **paragraph** or document has a central idea and does not digress into unrelated topics.

The logical sequence provided through **outlining** is essential to achieving unity. An outline enables you to lay out the most direct route from **introduction** to **conclusion**, and it enables you to build each paragraph around a topic sentence that expresses a single idea. Effective **transition** helps build unity, as well as **coherence**, because transitional terms clarify the relationship of each part to what precedes it.

up

Adding the word *up* to **verbs** often creates a redundant phrase. See also **conciseness**.

- You must open ~~up~~ the exhaust valve.

usability testing

Usability refers to whether **readers** can use a print or an online document to easily fulfill their goals or accomplish tasks. For example, the usability of a technical **manual** might refer to the ability of readers to perform a procedure accurately and smoothly with the aid of **instructions**.*

Usability testing involves teams of skilled technical writers, usability specialists, and interface designers. Usability testing of documents has three main goals:

- To ensure that a document is easy to use and allows users to accomplish the tasks outlined in that document
- To detect potential problems for users and to guide writers in solving them, minimizing the risk of releasing ineffective documents

**Usability engineering*, or *user-centered design (UCD)*, refers to the process of developing products and systems with the users' needs in mind so that ideally usability is built into both products and their documentation from the beginning.

- To enable companies to avoid repeating mistakes in future documents

Usability testing helps produce a document that reduces the learning curve, allows more functionality with less effort, and increases productivity. At the same time, by focusing development on users, companies also reap benefits in reduced costs and increased customer satisfaction in the following ways:

- Enhance the organization's reputation for high-quality documentation.
- Increase the likelihood that documents will be used.
- Minimize the need for updates and maintenance releases.
- Ensure that product and document changes can be made before they become expensive.
- Support efficient document development and training.

Test participants typically are members of the target **audience** for the document. If the participants encounter problems with the document, it is likely that actual users will experience similar problems. For example, if page 15 of a tax form is unclear to test participants, it will likely be confusing, as well, to most taxpayers.

Usability tests can include one or more of the following methods:

- *Read and locate test.* Test participants respond to questions based on content found in different locations of a document. Testers record whether and how participants find answers to each question, and how much time it takes them to do so. This test evaluates ease of navigation and document **format** and **organization**.
- *User edit.* Testers watch participants perform real tasks while using the document to predict if users will be able to understand and follow the document's instructions.
- *Protocol method.* Test participants make comments aloud as they read and respond to sections of text and to graphics. This test can reveal a wide array of document problems, such as **clarity**, **coherence**, **tone**, and use of **persuasion**.
- *Comprehension test.* Test participants take a written quiz to measure comprehension and recall of document contents, such as text, **visuals**, and **tables**.
- *Survey or interview.* Testers ask participants the same questions both before and after they read documents to determine whether the participants' comprehension of and attitude toward the documents have improved, or they ask questions only after participants read a document to determine clarity and comprehension of the document.

Analyzing the results of such tests can help writers and designers detect problems and determine whether the document's goals have been met. If test participants have trouble navigating a document or quickly locating specific items, for example, the organization as well as **layout and design** should be revised. See also **forms design**, **interviewing for information**, and **questionnaires**.

WEB LINK	Planning and Conducting Usability Tests
For links to sites that provide detailed guidance for conducting usability testing, see ***bedfordstmartins.com/alred*** and select *Links for Handbook Entries*.	

usage

Usage describes the choices we make among the various words and expressions available in our language. The lines between standard English and nonstandard English and between formal and informal English are determined by those choices. Your guideline in any situation requiring such choices should be appropriateness: Is the word or expression you use appropriate to your **audience** and your subject? When it is, you are practicing good usage.

This book contains many entries on specific usage questions. For a complete list of the usage entries in this book, see "Commonly Misused Words and Phrases" on pages 646–47. Usage entries are also distinguished by italicized section titles (for example, see **utilize**). An up-to-date **dictionary** is also an invaluable aid in your selection of the right word.

WEB LINK	Online Usage and Style Guides
Bartleby.com provides classic reference books online, including the *American Heritage Book of English Usage*. For this and additional useful links, see ***bedfordstmartins.com/alred*** and select *Links for Handbook Entries*.	

utilize

Do not use *utilize* as a long variant of *use*, which is the general word for "employ for some purpose." *Use* will almost always be clearer and less pretentious. See **affectation** and **plain language**.

V

vague words

A vague word is one that is imprecise in the context in which it is used. Some words encompass such a broad range of meanings that there is no focus for their definition. Words such as *real*, *nice*, *important*, *good*, *bad*, *contact*, *thing*, and *fine* are often called "omnibus words" because they can have so many meanings and interpretations. In speech, our vocal inflections help make the meanings of such words clear. Because you cannot rely on vocal inflections when you are writing, avoid using vague words. Be concrete and specific. See also **abstract / concrete words** and **word choice**.

VAGUE It was a *good* meeting.
[Why was it good?]

SPECIFIC The meeting resolved three questions: pay scales, fringe benefits, and workloads.

verbals

Verbals are derived from **verbs** but function as **nouns**, **adjectives**, and **adverbs**. The three types of verbals are gerunds, infinitives, and participles.

Gerunds

A gerund is a verbal ending in *-ing* that is used as a noun. A gerund can be used as a subject, a direct **object**, the object of a **preposition**, a subjective **complement**, or an **appositive**.

- *Drawing* is a useful engineering skill. [subject]
- I find *drawing* interesting. [direct object]
- We were unprepared for their *coming*. [object of preposition]
- Seeing is *believing*. [subjective complement]
- My primary departmental function, *programming*, occupies about two-thirds of my time on the job. [appositive]

Only the possessive form of a noun or **pronoun** should precede a gerund.

- *John's* working has not affected his grades.
- *His* working has not affected his grades.

Infinitives

An infinitive is the bare, or uninflected, form of a verb (for example, *go*, *run*, *fall*, *talk*, *dress*, *shout*) without the restrictions imposed by **person** and **number**. Along with the gerund and the participle, it is one of the nonfinite verb forms. The infinitive is generally preceded by the word *to*, which, although not an inherent part of the infinitive, is considered to be the sign of an infinitive. An infinitive is a verbal and can function as a noun, an adjective, or an adverb.

- *To expand* is not the only objective. [noun]
- These are the instructions *to follow*. [adjective]
- The company struggled *to survive*. [adverb]

The infinitive can reflect two **tenses**: the present and (with a helping verb) the present perfect.

- to go [present tense]
- to have gone [present perfect tense]

The most common mistake made with infinitives is using the present perfect tense when the simple present tense is sufficient.

- I should not have tried to go ~~have gone~~ so early.

Infinitives formed with the root form of transitive verbs can express both active and (with a helping verb) passive **voice**.

- to hit [present tense, active voice]
- to have hit [present perfect tense, active voice]
- to be hit [present tense, passive voice]
- to have been hit [present perfect tense, passive voice]

A split infinitive is one in which an adverb is placed between the sign of the infinitive, *to*, and the infinitive itself. Because they make up a grammatical unit, the infinitive and its sign are better left intact than separated by an intervening adverb.

- To ~~initially~~ build a client base, experts recommend networking with friends and family.

However, it may occasionally be better to split an infinitive than to allow a sentence to become awkward, ambiguous, or incoherent.

AMBIGUOUS	She agreed immediately *to deliver* the specimen to the lab. [This sentence could be interpreted to mean that she agreed immediately.]
CLEAR	She agreed *to* immediately *deliver* the specimen to the lab. [This sentence is no longer ambiguous.]

Participles

A participle is a verb form that functions as an adjective. Present participles end in *-ing*.

- *Increasing* costs forced us to reduce our staff.

Past participles end in *-ed*, *-t*, *-en*, *-n*, or *-d*.

- What are the *estimated* costs?
- Repair the *bent* lever.
- Return the *broken* part.
- What are the metal's *known* properties?
- The story, *told* many times before, was still interesting.

The perfect participle is formed with the present participle of the helping verb *have* plus the past participle of the main verb.

- *Having gotten* [perfect participle] a large bonus, the *smiling* [present participle], *contented* [past participle] technician worked harder than ever.

A participle cannot be used as the verb of a sentence. Inexperienced writers sometimes make that mistake, and the result is a **sentence fragment**.

- The committee chair was responsible. ~~His~~ , his vote being the decisive one.
- The committee chair was responsible. His vote ~~being~~ was the decisive one.

For information on participial and infinitive phrases, see **phrases**.

verbs

DIRECTORY

Types of Verbs 573
Forms of Verbs 574
Finite Verbs 574
Nonfinite Verbs 574
Properties of Verbs 574

A verb is a word or group of words that describes an action ("The copier *jammed* at the beginning of the job"), states how something or someone is affected by an action ("He *was disappointed* that the proposal was rejected"), or affirms a state of existence ("She *is* a district manager now").

Types of Verbs

Verbs are either transitive or intransitive. A *transitive verb* requires a direct **object** to complete its meaning.

- They *laid* the foundation on October 24.
  [*Foundation* is the direct object of the transitive verb *laid*.]
- Rosalie Anderson *wrote* the treasurer a memo.
  [*Memo* is the direct object of the transitive verb *wrote*.]

An *intransitive verb* does not require an object to complete its meaning. It makes a full assertion about the subject without assistance (although it may have **modifiers**).

- The engine *ran*.
- The engine *ran* smoothly and quietly.

A *linking verb* is an intransitive verb that links a **complement** to the subject.

- The carpet *is* stained.
  [*Is* is a linking verb; *stained* is a subjective complement.]

Some intransitive verbs, such as *be*, *become*, *seem*, and *appear*, are almost always linking verbs. A number of others, such as *look*, *sound*, *taste*, *smell*, and *feel*, can function as either linking verbs or simple intransitive or transitive verbs. If you are unsure about whether one of those verbs is a linking verb, try substituting *seem*; if the sentence still makes sense, the verb is probably a linking verb.

- Their antennae *feel* delicate.
  [*Seem* can be substituted for *feel*—thus *feel* is a linking verb.]
- Their antennae *feel* delicately for their prey.
  [*Seem* cannot be substituted for *feel*; in this case, *feel* is a simple intransitive verb.]

Forms of Verbs

Verbs are described as being either finite or nonfinite.

Finite Verbs. A finite verb is the main verb of a **clause** or sentence. It makes an assertion about its subject and often serves as the only verb in its clause or sentence. ("The telephone *rang*, and the receptionist *answered* it.") See also **sentence construction**.

A helping verb (sometimes called an *auxiliary verb*) is used in a verb **phrase** to help indicate **mood**, **tense**, and **voice**. ("The phone *had* rung.") Phrases that function as helping verbs are often made up of combinations with the sign of the infinitive, *to* (for example, *am going to*, *is about to*, *has to*, and *ought to*). The helping verb always precedes the main verb, although other words may intervene. ("Machines *will* never completely *replace* people.")

Nonfinite Verbs. Nonfinite verbs are **verbals**—verb forms that function as **nouns**, **adjectives**, or **adverbs**.

A *gerund* is a noun that is derived from the *-ing* form of a verb. ("*Seeing* is *believing*.") An *infinitive*, which uses the root form of a verb (usually preceded by *to*), can function as a noun, an adverb, or an adjective.

- He hates *to complain*. [noun, direct object of *hates*]
- The valve closes *to stop* the flow. [adverb, modifies *closes*]
- This is the proposal *to consider*. [adjective, modifies *proposal*]

A *participle* is a verb form that can function as an adjective.

- The *rejected* proposal may be resubmitted when the concerns are addressed. [*Rejected* is a verb form that is used as an adjective modifying *proposal*.]

V

Properties of Verbs

Verbs must (1) agree in **person** with personal pronouns functioning as subjects, (2) agree in tense and **number** with their subjects, and (3) be in the appropriate voice.

ESL TIPS for Avoiding Shifts in Voice, Mood, or Tense

To achieve clarity in your writing, you must maintain consistency and avoid shifts. A shift is an abrupt change in voice, mood, or tense. Pay special attention when you edit your writing to check for the following types of shifts.

VOICE

- The captain permits his crew to go ashore, but ~~they are not~~ *he does not permit*
  ~~permitted~~ to go downtown. *them*
  [The entire sentence is now in the active voice.]

MOOD

- Reboot your computer, and ~~you should~~ empty the cache.
  [The entire sentence is now in the imperative mood.]

TENSE

- I was working quickly, and suddenly a box ~~falls~~ *fell* off the conveyor belt
  and ~~breaks~~ *broke* my foot.
  [The entire sentence is now in the past tense.]

Person is the term for the form of a personal pronoun that indicates whether the pronoun refers to the speaker, the person spoken to, or the person (or thing) spoken about. Verbs change their forms to agree in person with their subjects.

- I *see* [first person] a yellow tint, but she *sees* [third person] a yellow-green hue.

Tense refers to verb forms that indicate time distinctions. The six tenses are past, past perfect, present, present perfect, future, and future perfect.

Number refers to the two forms of a verb that indicate whether the subject of a verb is singular ("The copier *was* repaired") or plural ("The copiers *were* repaired").

Most verbs show the singular of the present tense by adding *-s* or *-es* (he *stands*, she *works*, it *goes*), and they show the plural without *-s* or *-es* (they *stand*, we *work*, they *go*). The verb *to be*, however, normally changes form to indicate the singular ("I *am* ready") or plural ("We *are* ready").

Voice refers to the two forms of a verb that indicate whether the subject of the verb acts or receives the action. The verb is in the *active voice* if the subject of the verb acts ("The bacteria *grow*"); the verb is in the *passive voice* if it receives the action ("The bacteria *are grown* in a petri dish").

WEB LINK	Conjugation of Verbs
The conjugation of a verb arranges all forms of the verb so that the differences caused by the changing of the person, tense, number, and voice are readily apparent. For a chart showing the full conjugation of the verb *drive*, see ***bedfordstmartins.com/alred*** and select *Links for Handbook Entries*.	

very

The use of **intensifiers** like *very* is tempting, but the word can usually be deleted.

- The board was ~~very~~ worried about a possible product recall.

When you do use intensifiers, clarify their meaning.

- The patient's resting heart rate was *very* fast; it was measured at 180 beats per minute.

via

Via is Latin for "by way of." The term should be used only in routing instructions.

- The package was shipped *via* FedEx.
- Her project was funded ~~via~~ *as a result of* the recent legislation.

V

visuals

Visuals can express ideas or convey information in ways that words alone cannot by making abstract concepts and relationships concrete. Visuals can show how things look (drawings, photographs, maps), rep-

resent numbers and quantities (graphs, tables), depict processes or relationships (flowcharts, Gantt charts, schematic diagrams), and show hierarchical relationships (organizational charts). They also highlight important information and emphasize key concepts succinctly and clearly.

Many qualities of good writing—simplicity, clarity, conciseness, directness—are equally important when creating and using visuals. Presented with clarity and consistency, visuals can help **readers** focus on key portions of your document, presentation, or Web site. Be aware, though, that even the best visual will not be effective without **context**—and most often context is provided by the text that introduces the visual and clarifies its purpose.

The following entries in this book are related to specific visuals and their use in printed and online documents, as well as in **presentations** (see that entry for presentation graphics).

drawings 156
flowcharts 195
formal reports 198
global graphics 233
graphs 243
layout and design 312
maps 336
organizational charts 380
photographs 397
tables 542
writing for the Web 592

Selecting Visuals

Consider your **audience** and your **purpose** carefully in selecting visuals. You would need different illustrations for an automobile owner's manual or an auto dealer's Web site, for example, than you would for a technician's diagnostic guide. Figure V–1 can help you select the most appropriate visuals, based on their purposes and special features. Jot down visual options when you are considering your **scope** and **organization**.

❖ ETHICS NOTE Visuals have the potential of misleading readers when data are selectively omitted or distorted. For example, Figure G–6 shows a graph that gives a misleading impression of lab-test failures because the scale is compressed, with some of the years selectively omitted. Visuals that mislead readers call the credibility of you and your organization into question at the least—and they are unethical. The use of misleading visuals can even subject you and your organization to lawsuits. ❖

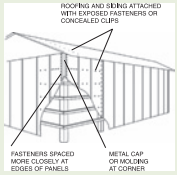
Integrating Visuals with Text

After selecting your visuals, carefully integrate them with your text. The following guidelines will improve the effectiveness of your visuals

CHOOSING APPROPRIATE VISUALS

TO SHOW OBJECTS AND SPATIAL RELATIONSHIPS

DRAWINGS CAN . . .


ROOFING AND SIDING ATTACHED WITH EXPOSED FASTENERS OR CONCEALED CLIPS
FASTENERS SPACED MORE CLOSELY AT EDGES OF PANELS
METAL CAP OR MOLDING AT CORNER

- Depict real objects difficult to photograph
- Depict imaginary objects
- Highlight only parts viewers need to see
- Show internal parts of equipment in cutaway views
- Show how equipment parts fit together in exploded views

PHOTOGRAPHS CAN . . .

- Show actual physical images of subjects
- Record an event in process
- Record the development of phenomena over time
- Record the as-found condition of a situation for an investigation

TO DISPLAY GEOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

MAPS CAN . . .

- Show specific geographic features of an area
- Show distance, routes, or locations of sites
- Show the geographic distribution of information (e.g., populations by region)

TO SHOW NUMERICAL AND OTHER RELATIONSHIPS

TABLES CAN . . .

Divisions	*Employees*
Research	*1,052*
Marketing	*2,782*
Automotive	*13,251*
Consumer Products	*2,227*

- Organize information systematically in rows and columns
- Present large numerical quantities concisely
- Facilitate item-to-item comparisons
- Clarify trends and other graphical information with precise data

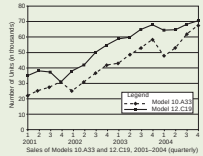
BAR & COLUMN GRAPHS CAN . . .

- Depict data in vertical or horizontal bars and columns for comparison
- Show quantities that make up a whole
- Track status of projects from start to finish
- Visually represent data shown in tables

V

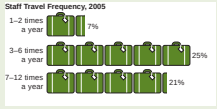
FIGURE V–1. Chart for Choosing Appropriate Visuals

LINE GRAPHS CAN . . .



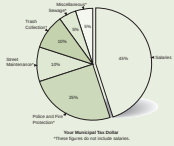
- Show trends over time in amounts, sizes, rates, and other measurements
- Give an at-a-glance impression of trends, forecasts, and extrapolations of data
- Compare more than one kind of data over the same time period
- Visually represent data shown in tables

PICTURE GRAPHS CAN . . .



- Use recognizable images to represent specific quantities
- Help nonexpert readers grasp the information
- Visually represent data shown in tables

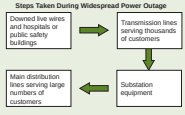
PIE GRAPHS CAN . . .



- Show quantities that make up a whole
- Give an immediate visual impression of the parts and their significance
- Visually represent data shown in tables or lists

TO SHOW STEPS IN A PROCESS OR RELATIONSHIPS IN A SYSTEM

FLOWCHARTS CAN . . .


Steps Taken During Widespread Power Outage
Downed live wires and hospitals or public safety buildings
Transmission lines serving thousands of customers
Substation equipment
Main distribution lines serving large numbers of customers

- Show how the parts or steps in a process or system interact
- Show the stages of an actual or a hypothetical process in the correct direction, including recursive steps

TO SHOW RELATIONSHIPS IN A HIERARCHY

ORGANIZATIONAL CHARTS CAN . . .

- Give an overview of an organization's departmental components
- Show how the components relate to one another
- Depict lines of authority within an organization

TO SUPPLEMENT OR REPLACE WORDS

SYMBOLS OR ICONS CAN . . .

- Convey ideas without words
- Save space and add visual appeal
- Transcend individual languages to communicate ideas effectively for international readers

V

FIGURE V–1. Chart for Choosing Appropriate Visuals (*continued*)

by describing how to position and identify them consistently and uniformly.

Begin by considering the best locations for visuals during the **outlining** stage of your draft. At appropriate points in your outline, either make a rough sketch of the visual, if you can, or write "illustration of . . . ," noting the source of the visual and enclosing each suggestion in a text box. You may also include sketches of visuals in your thumbnail pages, as discussed in **layout and design**. When **writing a draft**, place visuals as close as possible to the text where they are discussed—in fact, no visual should precede its first text mention. Refer to graphics (such as drawings and photographs) as "figures" and to tables as "tables." Clarify for readers why each visual is included in the text. The amount of description you should provide will vary, depending on your readers' backgrounds. For example, nonexperts may require lengthier explanations than experts need.

❖ ETHICS NOTE Obtain written permission to use copyrighted visuals—including images and multimedia material from Web sites—and acknowledge borrowed material in a source line below the caption for a figure and in a footnote at the bottom of a table. Use a site's "Contact Us" page to request approval. Acknowledge your use of any material from the public domain (thus uncopyrighted), such as demographic or economic data from government publications and Web sites, with a source line. See also **copyright**, **documenting sources**, and **plagiarism**. ❖

WRITER'S CHECKLIST **Creating and Integrating Visuals**

CREATING VISUALS

- ✔ Keep visuals simple. Include only information needed for discussion in the text and eliminate unneeded labels, arrows, boxes, and lines.
- ✔ Position the lettering of any explanatory text or labels horizontally; allow adequate white space within and around the visual.
- ✔ Specify the units of measurement used, make sure relative sizes are clear, and indicate distance with a scale when appropriate.
- ✔ Use consistent terminology; for example, do not refer to the same information as a "proportion" in the text and a "percentage" in the visual.
- ✔ Define **abbreviations** the first time they appear in the text and in figures and tables. If any symbols are not self-explanatory, include a key, as in Figure G–11.

WRITER'S CHECKLIST **Creating and Integrating Visuals** (*continued*)

- ✔ Give each visual a caption or concise **title** that clearly describes its content, and assign figure and table numbers if your document contains more than one illustration or table.
- ✔ Refer to visuals in the text of your document by their figure or table numbers.
- ✔ Review **global graphics** before preparing visuals for an international audience.

INTEGRATING VISUALS

- ✔ Clarify for readers why each visual is included in the text and provide an appropriate description.
- ✔ Place visuals as close as possible to the text where they are discussed but always after their first text mention.
- ✔ Allow adequate white space on the written or Web page around and within each illustration.
- ✔ Refer to visuals in the text of your document as "figures" or "tables" and by their figure or table numbers.
- ✔ Consider placing lengthy or detailed visuals in an **appendix**, which you refer to in the body of your document.
- ✔ In documents with more than five illustrations or tables, include a section following the **table of contents** titled "List of Figures" or "List of Tables" that identifies each by number, title, and page number.
- ✔ Check the editorial guidelines or recommended style manual when preparing visuals for a publication (see **trade journal articles**).

voice

In grammar, *voice* indicates the relation of the subject to the action of the **verb**. When the verb is in the *active voice*, the subject acts; when it is in the *passive voice*, the subject is acted upon.

ACTIVE David Cohen *wrote* the newsletter article.
[The subject, *David Cohen*, performs the action; the verb, *wrote*, describes the action.]

PASSIVE The newsletter article *was written* by David Cohen.
[The subject, *the newsletter article*, is acted upon; the verb, *was written*, describes the action.]

The two sentences say the same thing, but each has a different emphasis: The first emphasizes *David Cohen*; the second emphasizes *the newsletter article*. In technical writing, it is often important to emphasize who or what performs an action. Further, the passive-voice version is indirect because it places the performer of the action behind the verb instead of in front of it. Because the active voice is generally more direct, more concise, and easier for **readers** to understand, use the active voice unless the passive voice is more appropriate, as described on page 583. Whether you use the active voice or the passive voice, be careful not to shift voices in a sentence.

- David Cohen corrected the inaccuracy as soon as ~~it was identified~~ *identified it* ~~by~~ the editor.

Using the Active Voice

Improving Clarity. The active voice improves **clarity** and avoids confusion, especially in **instructions** and **manuals**.

PASSIVE Sections B and C *should be checked* for errors.
[Are they already checked?]

ACTIVE *Check* sections B and C for errors.
[The performer of the action, *you*, is understood: (You) *Check* the sections.]

Active voice can also help avoid **dangling modifiers**.

PASSIVE Hurrying to complete the work, the cables *were connected* improperly.
[*Who* was hurrying? The implication is the cables were hurrying!]

ACTIVE Hurrying to complete the work, the technician *connected* the cables improperly.
[Here, *hurrying to complete the work* properly modifies the performer of the action: *the technician*.]

Highlighting Subjects. One difficulty with passive sentences is that they can bury the performer of the action within **expletives** and prepositional **phrases**.

PASSIVE It *was reported by* the testing staff that the new model is defective.

ACTIVE The testing staff *reported* that the new model is defective.

Sometimes writers using the passive voice fail to name the performer—information that might be missed.

PASSIVE The problem *was discovered* yesterday.

ACTIVE The attending physician *discovered* the problem yesterday.

Achieving Conciseness. The active voice helps achieve **conciseness** because it eliminates the need for an additional helping verb as well as an extra **preposition** to identify the performer of the action.

PASSIVE Arbitrary changes in policy *are resented by* employees.

ACTIVE Employees *resent* arbitrary changes in policy.

The active-voice version takes one verb (*resent*); the passive-voice version takes two verbs (*are resented*) and an extra preposition (*by*).

Using the Passive Voice

The passive voice is sometimes effective or even necessary. Indeed, for reasons of tact and diplomacy, you might need to use the passive voice to avoid accusing others.

ACTIVE Your staff *did not meet* the quota last month.

PASSIVE The quota *was not met* last month.

❖ ETHICS NOTE Be careful, however, not to use the passive voice to evade responsibility or to obscure an issue or information that readers should know.

- Several mistakes *were made*.
  [*Who* made the mistakes?]
- It *has been decided*.
  [*Who* has decided?]

See also **ethics in writing**. ❖

When the performer of the action is either unknown or unimportant, of course, use the passive voice. ("The copper mine *was discovered* in 1929.") When the performer of the action is less important than the receiver of that action, the passive voice is sometimes more appropriate. ("Ann Bryant *was presented* with an award by the president.")

When you are explaining an operation in which the reader is not actively involved or when you are explaining a process or a procedure, the passive voice may be more appropriate. In the following example, anyone—it really does not matter who—could be the performer of the action.

- Area strip mining *is used* in regions of flat to gently rolling terrain, like that found in the Midwest. Depending on applicable reclamation laws, the topsoil *may be removed* from the area *to be mined*, *stored*, and later *reapplied* as surface material during reclamation of the mined land. After the removal of the topsoil, a trench *is cut* through the overburden to expose the upper surface of the coal to be mined. The overburden from the first cut *is placed* on the unmined land adjacent to the cut. After the first cut *has been completed*, the coal *is removed*.

Do not, however, simply assume that any such explanation should be in the passive voice; in fact, as in the following example, the active voice is often more effective.

- In the operation of an internal combustion engine, an explosion in the combustion chamber *forces* the pistons down in the cylinders. The movement of the pistons in the cylinders *turns* the crankshaft.

Ask yourself, "Would it be of any advantage to the reader to know the performer of the action?" If the answer is yes, use the active voice, as in the previous example.

ESL TIPS for Choosing Voice

Different languages place different values on active-voice and passive-voice constructions. In some languages, the passive is used frequently; in others, hardly at all. As a nonnative speaker of English, you may have a tendency to follow the pattern of your native language. But remember, even though technical writing may sometimes require the passive voice, active verbs are highly valued in English.

W

wait for / wait on

Wait on should be restricted in writing to the activities of hospitality and service employees. ("We need extra staff to *wait on* customers.") Otherwise, use *wait for*. ("Be sure to *wait for* Ms. Garcia's approval.") See also **idioms**.

Web design (*see* writing for the Web)

when / where / that

When and if (or *if and when*) is a colloquial expression that should not be used in writing.

- When ~~and if~~ funding is approved, you will get the position.
- If ~~When and if~~ funding is approved, you will get the position.

In phrases using the *where . . . at* construction, *at* is unnecessary and should be omitted.

- Where is his office ~~at~~?

Do not substitute *where* for *that* to anticipate an idea or fact to follow.

- I read in the newsletter that ~~where~~ research funding will increase.

whether

Whether communicates the notion of a choice. The use of *whether or not* to indicate a choice between alternatives is redundant.

- The client asked whether ~~or not~~ the proposal was finished.

The phrase *as to whether* is clumsy and redundant. Either use *whether* alone or omit it altogether.

- ~~As to whether we will~~ commit to a long-term ~~contract, we have decided to do so.~~ *We have decided to* *contract.*

while

While, meaning "during an interval of time," is sometimes substituted for connectives like *and*, *but*, *although*, and *whereas*. Used as a connective in that way, *while* often causes ambiguity.

- Ian Evans is a media director, ~~while~~ Joan Thomas is a vice president for research. *and*

Do not use *while* to mean *although* or *whereas*.

- ~~While~~ Ryan Sims is retired, he serves as our technical consultant. *Although*

Restrict *while* to its meaning of "during the time that."

- I'll have to catch up on my reading *while* I am on vacation.

white papers

A white paper is a document that announces a new product or a newly developed technical or business solution to a common problem. White papers function as (1) educational tools that provide credibility for an organization and (2) marketing tools to establish a company's market position as an industry leader. White papers are often posted on a company's Web site, distributed to potential customers at trade shows and conferences, and published at Web sites that feature white papers from various sources.

Using Persuasion

White papers are promotional documents, so they must be interesting to read, reflect strong empathy with the reader, and use effective **persuasion**. White papers require that writers shift from a technology-centered point of view to the **"you" viewpoint**, as suggested in the following ex-

ample from Darren K. Barefoot's article "Ten Tips on Writing White Papers."*

TECHNOLOGY CENTERED	Buy a DVD player because it has a 128-bit over-sampling and advanced virtual surround sound.
READER CENTERED	Buy a DVD player because you want better sound and a crisper picture.

If your white paper is targeted to nonspecialists, leave the details to the technical **manuals**, sales **brochures**, and press releases. Focus on your readers' concerns and explain clearly how your company or product can solve their specific problems.

Preparing to Write

Begin by checking with management to determine their goals for the white paper and how it fits into their overall strategy. Then analyze your **audience** to determine whether your readers are technical experts or nonexperts such as executives. Plan your language and approach appropriately. For example, experts understand and appreciate technical terminology, whereas executives tend to focus on the bottom line and the benefits of solving a problem.

Decide on the most appropriate **method of development** and then create an outline that offers your product or solution as the most effective way to solve the readers' problem. An outline helps provide **coherence** and **transition** to your draft so that readers can follow the development of a new technology or product as the white paper moves smoothly from the **introduction** to the **conclusion**. Define any new terms, avoid **affectation**, and follow the principles of effective **technical writing style**.

As you consider your **scope**, make certain that your white paper deals with only one product or solution; for multiple topics, use multiple white papers. The length of your white paper depends on the complexity of your product, but try to keep it as brief as possible. If your document runs more than ten pages, include a **table of contents**.

Developing Major Sections

The *introduction* to a white paper should attract your readers' interest by explaining the problem that needs to be solved. Readers might be persuaded to accept your message more readily if they believe your company is developing innovative products, as in the following example:

*Darren K. Barefoot, "Ten Tips on Writing White Papers," *Intercom*, February 2002, 12–13. See also Michael A. Stelzner, "How to Create a Persuasive White Paper," *Intercom*, June 2007, 24–27.

- The rings of Saturn have puzzled astronomers ever since Galileo discovered them in 1610 using the first telescope. Recently, even more rings have been discovered. . . .

  Our company's Scientific Instruments Division designs and manufactures research-quality, computer-controlled telescopes that promise to solve the puzzles of Saturn's rings by enabling scientists to use multicolor differential photometry to determine the rings' origins and composition.

Use the *body* to provide supporting evidence that your product or solution is the best way to solve the readers' problem. Be careful not to be too biased toward your own product, however, especially early in your white paper. You might start by explaining what led to the development of the problem and how its solution impacts all customers in the industry. Describe the kind of technology that can solve the problem, and develop a high standard for the needed solution. Then explain precisely how your way of solving the customer's problem is the best way to meet that standard. Provide persuasive supporting evidence from outside sources. See **documenting sources** and **research**.

The *conclusion* of a white paper should summarize the problem and how your solution best solves it. As a marketing tool, your white paper should conclude by telling readers how to contact your company for more information.

Planning Layout and Design

A good design can make the most complex information look accessible and enable your readers to retrieve information easily. A white paper should make good use of **visuals** to help readers grasp and retain your message. Use such visuals carefully, however. A complex visual that requires paragraphs of explanation is more likely to hinder your reader's understanding than enhance it. Make the best use of **headings**, **lists**, call-outs, text boxes, and other devices that are described in **layout and design**.

❖ ETHICS NOTE Ask management, subject-matter experts, and perhaps your legal department to read the finished draft to make certain it meets management's objectives, is technically accurate, and stays within legal requirements. Be sure to cite any outside sources used and get permission from any source quoted. See **copyright** and **plagiarism**. ❖

WEB LINK	White Papers
For links to online collections of white papers, see ***bedfordstmartins.com/alred*** and select *Links for Handbook Entries.*	

who / whom

Who is a subjective case pronoun, and *whom* is the objective case form of *who*. When in doubt about which form to use, substitute a personal pronoun to see which one fits. If *he*, *she*, or *they* fits, use *who*.

- *Who* is the training coordinator?
  [You would say, "*She* is the training coordinator."]

If *him*, *her*, or *them* fits, use *whom*.

- It depends on *whom*? [You would say, "It depends on *them*."]

who's / whose / of which

Who's is the contraction of *who is*. ("*Who's* scheduled today?") *Whose* is the possessive case of *who*. ("Consider *whose* budget should be cut.")

Normally, *whose* is used with persons, and *of which* is used with inanimate objects.

- The employee *whose* car had been towed away was angry.
- Completing a Ph.D. in engineering is an achievement *of which* to be proud.

If *of which* causes a sentence to sound awkward, *whose* may be used with inanimate objects. (Compare: "The business the profits *of which* steadily declined" versus "The business *whose* profits steadily declined.")

-wise

Although the **suffix** *-wise* often seems to provide a tempting shortcut in writing, it leads more often to **affectation** than to economical expression. It is better to rephrase the sentence.

- Our department ~~rates~~ *has a* high ~~efficiencywise.~~ *efficiency rating.*

The *-wise* suffix is appropriate, however, in instructions that indicate certain space or directional requirements (*lengthwise*, *clockwise*).

word choice

Mark Twain once said, "The difference between the right word and almost the right word is the difference between 'lightning' and 'lightning bug.'" The most important goal in choosing the right word in technical writing is the preciseness implied by Twain's comment. Vague words and abstract words defeat preciseness because they do not convey the writer's meaning directly and clearly.

VAGUE It was a *productive* meeting.

PRECISE The meeting resulted in the approval of the health-care benefits package.

In the first sentence, *productive* sounds specific but conveys little information; the revised sentence says specifically what made the meeting "productive." Although **abstract words** may at times be appropriate to your topic, using them unnecessarily will make your writing difficult to understand.

Being aware of the **connotations** and denotations of words will help you anticipate reactions of your audience to the words you choose. Understanding **antonyms** (*fresh/stale*) and **synonyms** (*notorious/infamous*) will increase your ability to choose the proper word. Make other **usage** decisions carefully, especially in technical contexts, such as **average / median / mean** and **biannual / biennial**.

Although many entries throughout this book will help you improve your word choices and avoid impreciseness, the following entries should be particularly helpful:

affectation 25
biased language 50
buzzwords 60
clichés 74
conciseness 93
euphemisms 182
idioms 258
jargon 296
logic errors 329
vague words 570

A key to choosing the correct and precise word is to keep current in your reading and to be aware of new words in your profession and in the language. In your quest for the right word, an up-to-date **dictionary** is essential. See also **English as a second language**.

WEB LINK Wise Word Choices

For online exercises on word choice, see ***bedfordstmartins.com/alred*** and select *Exercise Central*.

writing a draft

You are well prepared to write a rough draft when you have established your **purpose** and reader's needs, considered the **context**, defined your **scope**, completed adequate **research**, and prepared an outline (whether rough or developed). (See also **audience** and **outlining**.) Writing a draft is simply transcribing and expanding the notes from your outline into **paragraphs**, without worrying about **grammar**, refinements of language, or **spelling**. Refinement will come with **revision** and **proofreading**. See also "Five Steps to Successful Writing" on page xv.

Writing and revising are different activities. Do not let worrying about a good opening slow you down. Instead, concentrate on getting your ideas on paper—now is not the time to polish or revise. Do not wait for inspiration—treat writing a draft as you would any other on-the-job task.

WRITER'S CHECKLIST **Writing a Rough Draft**

- ✔ Set up your writing area with whatever supplies you need (laptop, notepads, reference material, and so on). Avoid distractions.
- ✔ Resist the temptation of writing first drafts without planning.
- ✔ Use an outline (rough or developed) as a springboard to start and to write quickly.
- ✔ Give yourself a set time in which you write continuously, regardless of how good or bad your writing seems to be. But don't stop if you are rolling along easily — keep your momentum.
- ✔ Start with the section that seems easiest. Your readers will neither know nor care that the middle section of the document was the first section you wrote.
- ✔ Keep in mind your readers' needs, expectations, and knowledge of the subject. Doing so will help you write directly to your readers and suggest which ideas need further development.
- ✔ When you come to something difficult to explain, try to relate the new concept to something with which the readers are familiar, as discussed in **figures of speech**.
- ✔ Routinely save to your hard drive and create a backup copy of your documents on separate disks or on the company network.
- ✔ Give yourself a small reward — a short walk, a soft drink, a brief chat with a friend, an easy task — after you have finished a section.
- ✔ Reread what you have written when you return to your writing. Seeing what you have already written can return you to a productive frame of mind.

writing for the Web

With the importance and pervasiveness of Web technology in the workplace, you may be asked to contribute content for your company or organization Web site. See also **blogs and forums**, **FAQs**, and **questionnaires**.*

Crafting Content for Web Pages

Most **readers** scan Web pages for specific information, so state your important points first, before providing detailed supporting information. Keep your writing **style** simple and straightforward and, when possible, use **plain language**. Use the following techniques to make your content more accessible to your audience.

Chunking Content. Break up dense blocks of text by dividing them into short **paragraphs** so that they stand out and can be quickly scanned and absorbed. Focus each passage on one facet of your topic. Where necessary, include links to more detailed secondary information.

Headings. Use informative topic **headings** for paragraphs or sections to help readers decide at a glance whether to read a passage. Headings also clarify text by highlighting structure and organization. They signal breaks in coverage from one topic to the next as well as marking **transitions** between topics. Set off headings in boldface or another text style, such as color, on a separate line either directly above or in the left margin, directly across from the text they describe.

Lists. Use bulleted and numbered **lists** to break up dense paragraphs, reduce text length, and highlight important content. Do not overuse lists, however. Lists without supporting explanatory text lack **coherence**.

Keywords. To help search engines and your audience find your site, use terms that highlight content in the first 50 or so words of text for each new topic.

WITHOUT KEYWORDS

We are proud to introduce a new commemorative coin honoring our bank's founder and president. The item will be available on this Web site after December 3, 2011, which is the hundredth anniversary of our first deposit.

*For questions about the appropriateness of content you plan to post on the Web, check with your Webmaster or manager to determine if your content complies with your organization's Web policy. On campus, consult your instructor or campus computer support staff about standards for posting Web content.

WITH KEYWORDS

The new *Reynolds* commemorative coin features a portrait of *George G. Reynolds*, the founder and president of *Reynolds Bank*. The coin can be purchased after December 3, 2011, in honor of the hundredth anniversary of *Reynolds* first deposit.

Directional Cues. Avoid navigational cues that make sense on the printed page but not on a Web screen, such as "as shown in the example below" or "in the graph at the top of this page." Instead, position links so that they are tied directly to the content to which they pertain, such as the ***Back to Top*** links at sites that are several screens long.

Graphics. Graphics provide information that text alone cannot, as well as visual relief. Use only **visuals** that are appropriate for your audience and **purpose**, however. Avoid overusing complex graphs and animation that can clutter or slow access to your site. Work with the site Webmaster to optimize all graphics for speed of access. Ask about the preferred file-compression format for your visuals. Also consider giving visitors a graphics-free option for quicker access to your content.

Hyperlinks. Use *internal* hyperlinks to help readers navigate the information at your site. If text is longer than two or three screens, create a table of contents of hyperlinks for it at the top of the Web page and link each item to the relevant content further down the page. Use *external* hyperlinks to enrich coverage of your topic with information outside your site and to help reduce content on your page. When you do, consider placing an icon or a text label next to the hyperlink to inform users that they are leaving the host site. Avoid too many hyperlinks within text paragraphs because they can distract readers, make scanning the text difficult, and tempt readers to leave your site before reaching the end of your page.

Fonts. Font sizes and styles affect screen legibility. Because computer screens display fonts at lower resolutions compared to printed text, sans serif fonts often work better for online text passages. Do not use ALL CAPITAL LETTERS or **boldface type** for blocks of text because they slow the reader. For content that contains special characters (such as mathematical or chemical content), consult your Webmaster about the best way to submit the files for HTML (hypertext markup language) coding or post them as PDF (portable document format) files. See **layout and design** for a discussion of typography.

Line Length. Line length also affects readability; short line lengths reduce the amount of eye movement necessary to scan text. Optimal line length is approximately half the width of the screen. To achieve this

optimal length, draft text that is between 50 and 70 characters (or between 10 and 12 words) to a line.

❖ ETHICS NOTE Document sources of information—text, images, **tables**, streaming video, and other multimedia material—or of help received. Seek prior approval from the **copyright** holder before using any such information. Documenting your sources not only is required legally and ethically but also bolsters the credibility of your site. To document your sources, either provide links to your source or use a citation, as described in **documenting sources**. See also **plagiarism**. ❖

Linking to Reputable Sites

Links to outside sites can expand your content. However, review such sites carefully before linking to them. Is the site's author or sponsoring organization reputable? Is its content accurate, current, and unbiased? Does the site date-stamp its content with notices such as "This page was last updated on January 1, 2011"? (For more advice on evaluating Web sites, see **research**.) Link directly to the page or specific area of an outside site that is relevant to your users, and be sure that you provide a clear **context** for why you are sending your readers there.

Posting an Existing Document

If you post existing documents to a Web site, try to retain the original sequence and layout of the documents. If, for example, you shorten or revise an existing document for posting to the Web, add a notice informing readers how it differs from the original.

Before posting the document publicly, review it offline to ensure that it is the correct version and that all links work and go to the right places. Consider creating a "single-file version" of the content (a version formatted as a single, long Web page) for readers who will print the content to read offline. See also **proofreading** and **repurposing**.

Protecting User Privacy

Ensure that your content is consistent with your site's privacy policies for site users. A site's privacy statement informs visitors about how the site sponsor handles solicited and unsolicited information, its policy on the use of cookies,* and legal action it takes against hackers.

*"Cookies" are small files that are downloaded to your computer when you browse certain Web pages. Cookies hold information, such as your user name and password, so you do not need to enter it each time you visit the site.

Writing for a Global Audience

When you write for public access sites, eliminate expressions and references that make sense only to someone familiar with American English. Express **dates**, clock times, and measurements consistent with international practices. For visuals, choose symbols and icons, colors, representations of human beings, and captions that can be easily understood, as described in **global communication** and **global graphics**. See also **biased language** and **English as a second language**.

DIGITAL TIP

Using PDF Files

Convert documents such as reports, flyers, and brochures to PDF files to make sure your electronic documents look identical to your printed documents. Readers can view a PDF file online, download it, or print it in whole or in part. Using specialized PDF software, you can create sophisticated forms, add signatures and watermarks to documents, and password-protect sensitive files. For more tips on this topic, go to ***bedfordstmartins.com/alred*** and select *Digital Tips*, "Using PDF Files."

WEB LINK	Web Design Resources

For a helpful overview of the process and principles of designing Web sites, see ***bedfordstmartins.com*** and select *Try a tutorial*, "On Web design." For links to related sites that include advice for improving accessibility for people with disabilities, select *Links for Handbook Entries*.

Y

"you" viewpoint

The "you" viewpoint places the reader's interest and perspective foremost. It is based on the principle that most readers are naturally more concerned about their own needs than they are about those of a writer or a writer's organization. See **audience**.

The "you" viewpoint often, but not always, means using the words *you* and *your* rather than *we*, *our*, *I*, and *mine*. Consider the following sentence that focuses on the needs of the writer and organization (*we*) rather than on those of the reader.

- *We must receive* your signed approval before *we can process* your payment.

Even though the sentence uses *your* twice, the words in italics suggest that the **point of view** centers on the writer's need to receive the signed approval in order to process the payment. Consider the following revision, written with the "you" viewpoint.

- *So you can receive* your payment promptly, please send your signed approval.

Because the benefit to the reader is stressed, the writer is more likely to motivate the reader to act. See also **persuasion**.

In some instances, as suggested earlier, you may need to avoid using the **pronouns** *you* and *your* to achieve a positive **tone** and maintain goodwill. Notice how the first of the following examples (with *your*) seems to accuse the reader. But the second (without *your*) uses **positive writing** to emphasize a goal that reader and writer share—meeting a client's needs.

ACCUSATORY	*Your* budget makes no allowance for setup costs.
POSITIVE	The budget should include an allowance for setup costs to meet all the concerns of our client.

As this example illustrates, the "you" viewpoint means more than using the pronouns *you* and *your* or adopting a particular writing **style**. By genuinely considering the readers' interests as you write, you can achieve your **purpose** not only in **correspondence** but also in **proposals**, many **reports**, and **presentations**.

your / you're

Your is a possessive **pronoun** ("*your* wallet"); *you're* is the contraction of *you are* ("*You're* late for the meeting"). If you tend to confuse *your* with *you're*, use the search function to review both terms during **proofreading**.

Acknowledgments (*continued*)

Figure D–11. Exploded-View Drawing. From Xerox Corporation, *WorkCentre XD Series User Guide*, page 6. Copyright © Xerox Corporation. Used with permission.

Figure D–12. Cutaway Drawing of a Disk Drive. From *Hard Disk Quick Reference* by P. D. Moulton and Timothy S. Stanley. Copyright © 1989 by Que Publishing. Reprinted with the permission of Pearson Computer Publishing, a Division of Pearson Communication.

Figure F–2. Flowchart Using Labeled Blocks. Information from PEPCO, "How We Restore Power," *Lines* 33, no. 7 (July 2004). Reprinted with permission.

Figure F–5. Formal Report. Reprinted with the permission of Susan Litzinger, a student at Pennsylvania State University, Altoona.

Figure F–7. Online Form with Typical Components. Copyright © Facebook, Inc. Reprinted with permission.

Figure G–4. International Organization for Standardization Symbols. From "Graphical Symbols to Address Consumer Needs" by John Perry, in the *ISO Bulletin* page, March 2003. Copyright © 2003 by ISO. Reprinted with permission.

Figure I–6. "CharBroil Use and Care Manual (Warning in a Set of Instructions)." Reprinted with the permission of W. C. Bradley Company, 1997, Columbus, Georgia.

Figure N–2. Newsletter Article from *Connection* (January 2007): 7.

Figure N–3. Company Newsletter (Front Page). From *Connection* (February 2008). Reprinted with the permission of Ken Cook Company.

Figure P–2. Photo (of Control Device). Copyright © 2003 by Ken Cook Company. Reprinted with the permission of Ken Cook Company.

Figure R–6. Résumé (Highlighting Professional Credentials). Prepared by Kim Isaacs, Advanced Career Systems, Inc. Reprinted with permission.

Figure R–11. Advanced Résumé (Combining Functional and Chronological Elements). Prepared by Kim Isaacs, Advanced Career Systems, Inc. Reprinted with permission.

Index

Words and phrases in **bold type** indicate main alphabetical entries. Usage terms appear in *italic type*.

a / an, 1, 43–44
a few / few, 191
a lot, 2
a while / awhile, 47
abbreviations, 2–6
  acronyms and initialisms, 2, 3, 12
  audience and, 2–3
  capitalization of, 65
  commas with, 85
  in e-mail, 3, 165
  in figures and tables, 580
  in instant messaging, 2–3, 266–67
  in international correspondence, 279
  italics with, 294
  of Latin words, 5, 162–63, 179–80
  list of, in reports, 201
  for measurements, 4
  for names and titles, 4–5
  for organization names, 3–4
  periods with, 3, 394
  and plain language, 403–4
  plurals of, 3, 37
  postal, 5, 321
  scholarly, 5
  spelling out, 3, 184
  in tables, 542
  in titles of works, 554
  writer's checklist for, 3
above, 6
abridged dictionaries, 126–27
absolute phrases, 82
absolute words, 17, 179
absolutely, 6
abstract nouns, 29, 367
abstract / concrete words, 6–7
  ethics in writing and, 181
  figures of speech and, 192
  gobbledygook and, 236
  and word choice, 590
abstracts, 7–9
  vs. executive summaries, 184
  in formal reports, 200, 206
  in grant proposals, 239
  samples of, 8, 206
  of trade journal articles, 559
academic titles, 4–5
accept / except, 9
acceptance / refusal letters (for employment), 9–11. *See also* employment process
  professionalism and, 10
  samples of, 10, 11
accident reports. *See* trouble reports
accordingly. See conjunctive adverbs
accuracy. *See also* proofreading
  in application cover letters, 42
  in correspondence, 113–14, 164
  in executive summaries, 184
  of instructions, 271, 273
  in minutes of meetings, 350
  in note-taking, 367
  in résumés, 491–92
accuracy / precision, 11
accusative case. *See* objective case
acknowledgment letters, 11–12
  sample of, 12
acronyms and initialisms, 12. *See also* abbreviations
action verbs
  pronoun case and, 67
  in résumés, 506
activate / actuate, 12
active listening, 324–26
active voice, 581–83. *See also* voice
  for clarity, 582

active voice (*continued*)
for conciseness, 95, 583
for emphasis, 170
in formal style, 536
infinitives and, 571
for instructions, 268
naming the actor, 576, 582
for plain language, 403–4
in sentence construction, 521
activity reports. *See* progress and activity reports
actually, 468
actuate / activate, 12
ad hoc, 12–13
adapt / adept / adopt, 13
adapting to new technologies, 13–15. *See also* digital tips
for content management, 100–101
for forms, 225
for layout and design, 317
for mathematical equations, 338
for presentations, 416
for research, 481–84
for résumés, 507–8
for revision, 95, 510
white papers for, 587
addresses, e-mail, 165, 503
addresses, street
commas with, 84
in letters, 318, 321
numbers in, 373
in résumés, 503
addresses, Web. *See* URLs
adept / adopt / adapt, 13
adjective clauses, 18, 174
adjectives, 15–19. *See also* adverbs; modifiers
absolute words, 17
articles as, 16, 43–44
commas with, 19, 83–84
comparison of, 17
with count nouns, 172–73
demonstrative, 15, 16, 172
descriptive, 15
ESL tips for, 17–18
gerunds as, 574
in idioms, 411
indefinite, 17
infinitives as, 571
irregular, 17
limiting, 15–17, 43
as modifiers, 352
nouns as, 19, 368, 408
numbers as, 16–17
order for, 18
participles as, 572, 574
phrases as, 398
placement of, 18–19
possessive, 16, 172
relative, 94
types of, 15–17
verbals as, 570
verbs as, 18, 528
adjustment letters, 19–22
context in, 102
professionalism and, 22
samples of, 20–21
Adobe PDF files, 508, 595
adopt / adapt / adept, 13
advanced search, 484
adverbs, 22–24. *See also* adjectives; modifiers
commas with, 23, 83
comparison of, 23–24
conjunctive, 23
gerunds as, 574
in idioms, 411
infinitives as, 571
intensifiers, 273–74, 352–53
irregular, 24
as modifiers, 352
nouns as, 368
numbers as, 16–17
phrases as, 398
placement of, 24
with prepositions, 410–11
and split infinitives, 571–72
types of, 23
verbals as, 570
advertisements, job, 302
advertising. *See* promotional writing
affect / effect, 24
affectation, 25–26
abbreviations and, 2–3
allusions and, 34
buzzwords as, 60–61
causes of, 25–26
ethics in writing and, 25

foreign words as, 25, 197–98
formal style as, 106–7, 537
as gobbledygook, 236
nominalizations as, 364
wordiness as, 94
affinity, 26
aforementioned, 6
aforesaid, 6, 25
age bias, avoiding, 52
agenda, for meetings, 342–43
sample of, 342
agreement, 26–32. *See also* pronoun-antecedent agreement; subject-verb agreement
in gender, 27, 30–31, 229, 429–30
in number, 26–27, 31–32, 369–70, 430
in person, 27, 574–75
of pronoun and antecedent, 27, 30–32, 429–30
of subject and verb, 26–30, 521–22, 574–75
with *this / that / these / those*, 16
aircraft, italics for names of, 294
all-capital letters. *See also* capitalization
in e-mail, 165
for emphasis, 171, 314–15
in Web design, 593
all ready / already, 32
all right, 33
all together / altogether, 33
allude / elude / refer, 33
allusion / illusion, 33
allusions, 33–34, 275
almost / most, 34
alot / a lot, 2
already / all ready, 32
alright / all right, 33
also, 34
altogether / all together, 33
ambiguity, 35–36
commas for preventing, 80
incomplete comparisons, 35
misplaced modifiers, 35–36, 353
prepositional phrases and, 399
in pronoun references, 35, 425–26
in telegraphic writing, 546
using *that* for, 552
word choice and, 36, 73
American Psychological Association. *See* APA documentation
among / between, 49
amongst, 49
amount / number, 36
ampersands, 36
in APA citations, 135
in company names, 4, 36
an. *See a / an*
analogy, 193
definition by, 121
in description, 125
and
both . . . and, 54, 99
commas with, 81, 86
with *etc.*, 179–80
pronoun-antecedent agreement with, 32
subject-verb agreement with, 29–30
and/or, 36
anecdotes, 289
annexes, in IEEE documentation, 142, 147
annotated bibliography, 52
anonymous. *See* unknown authors
antecedents. *See also* pronoun-antecedent agreement
compound, 32
implied, 426
pronouns and, 426–27, 429–30
references to, 35, 425–26
antonyms, 37
in thesaurus, 552
word choice and, 590
anxiety, presentation, 421
APA documentation, 134–41. *See also* documenting sources
for articles in periodicals, 136, 137–38
for books, 135–36
documentation models, 135–39
for electronic sources, 137–38
in-text citations, 134–35
for miscellaneous sources, 139
for multimedia sources, 138–39
sample pages, 140–41
apologies. *See* adjustment letters
apostrophes, 37
in contractions, 37, 103–4

apostrophes (*continued*)
showing possession, 37, 67–68, 407–8
appendixes, 38
for formal reports, 203
for grant proposals, 242
for proposals, 439, 442
in requests for proposals, 478
visuals in, 581
application cover letters, 38–42. *See also* application forms
professionalism and, 38
résumés and, 491
samples of, 39–41
application forms, 304–7. *See also* job search
ethics in writing and, 307–8
for grant proposals, 239
professionalism and, 284
sample of, 305–6
writer's checklist for, 307
appositives, 42–43
capitalization of, 65
case of, 42–43, 68, 429
commas with, 81–82
gerunds as, 570
nouns as, 368
arguments, loaded, 331
articles (*a* / *an* / *the*), 43–44
a / *an*, 1, 43–44
count nouns with, 173
definite, 43–44
ESL tips for, 43–44, 173
indefinite, 1, 43–44
telegraphic style and, 546
the, 43–44
unnecessary, 1, 44
articles in periodicals (print and electronic). *See also* newsletter articles; periodicals; trade journal articles
abstracts of, 7–9
APA documentation of, 136, 137–38
capitalization in titles of, 64, 554
databases and indexes for, 481–82
evaluating, 486
IEEE documentation of, 143, 144
MLA documentation of, 149, 150
quotation marks for titles of, 464, 555
as* / *because* / *since, 44–45
as / *like*, 324
as / *than*, and pronoun case, 67, 68
as much as* / *more than, 45
as such, 45
as to whether, 586
as well as, 45
ASCII résumés, 508
assure / *insure* / *ensure*, 273
attachments
e-mail, 165, 167
for grant proposals, 242
attributive adjectives, 18
audience, 46–47
abbreviations and, 2–3
for abstracts, 8–9
appropriate language for, 403
assessing, xvi–xviii, 46, 107–8, 409
for brochures, 57
content management for, 100
for correspondence, 106–7
defining terms for, 46, 121, 235–36
drafting and, 591
for environmental impact statements, 177
ESL tips for, xvii–xviii
global, 232–33
goodwill and, 107–8
for instructions, 268
layout and design and, 313
for manuals, 333
multiple, 46–47, 177–78
for newsletters, 361–63
pace and, 385
for presentations, 412–13
for proposals, 434
purpose and, 455
revision and, 508
selecting the medium for, 515
tone and, 556
usability testing for, 567–69
usage and, 569
for visuals, 577
for Web content, 592
for white papers, 587
writing style and, 106–7, 536
"you" viewpoint for, 596
augment* / *supplement, 47
author-date method of documentation. *See* APA documentation

authors, documenting. *See* corporate authors; multiple authors; unknown authors
auxiliary verbs. *See* helping verbs
average / median / mean, 47
awhile / a while, 47
awkwardness, 48
writer's checklist for, 48

back matter, for formal reports, 199, 203
background
in environmental impact statements, 177
in formal reports, 201
opening with, 288
in résumés, 501–2
bad / badly, 49
bad-news patterns
in correspondence, 109–11, 275
cultural differences in, 275
positive writing and, 406–7
for refusal letters, 10, 470–72
for resignation letters, 487–89
samples of, 110
bar graphs. *See* graphs
barely, 155
basis
of classification, 132
of comparison, 88
bcc: notations, 166, 323
be sure to, 49
because, reason is, 468
because / since / as, 44–45
because of / due to, 161, 186
behavioral interviews, 284
beside / besides, 49
between / among, 49
between you and me, 50, 410
bi- / semi-, 50
biannual / biennial, 50
biased evidence, 330
biased language, 50–52. *See also* sexist language
ethics in writing and, 181
professionalism and, 50
bibliographies, 52. *See also* documenting sources
abbreviations in, 4, 5
annotated, 52
in IEEE style, 133–34, 142–45, 147
in formal reports, 202, 203
for research, 483
biennial / biannual, 50
bilingual writers. *See* English as a second language (ESL)
blind-copy notations (*bcc:*), 166, 323
block quotations
APA style for, 135, 467
MLA style for, 148
blogs and forums, 53–54. *See also* writing for the Web
APA documentation of, 138
ethics in writing and, 54
functions of, 53, 518–19
MLA documentation of, 151
subject lines of, 554
body
of application cover letters, 42
of feasibility reports, 191
of formal reports, 199, 201–2, 213–17
of grant proposals, 240–41
of letters, 322
of presentations, 414–15
of proposals, 438
of reports, 474
of tables, 543
of white papers, 588
body depictions, for global graphics, 233–35
body movement, in presentations, 420, 421
boilerplate material, 104–5, 441
boldface. *See also* typography
for emphasis, 171, 315
in Web design, 593
books
APA documentation of, 135–39, 137
capitalization in titles of, 64, 554
catalogs for, 481
evaluating, 486
IEEE documentation of, 142–43
italics for titles of, 294, 464, 554
MLA documentation of, 148–49, 150
both / as well as, 45
both . . . and, 54, 99
box heads, in tables, 542

boxes
in forms, 225–26
for organizational charts, 380
in page design, 317
brackets, 55
in mathematical equations, 339
for parenthetical items, 55, 391
in quotations, 466
with *sic*, 55, 466–67
brainstorming, 55–56
during presentations, 416
for research, 479
for résumés, 501–2
sample of, 56
brand, personal, 299–300, 301–2
brochures, 56–60
APA documentation of, 139
designing, 57–58
IEEE documentation of, 145
italics for titles of, 294, 554
MLA documentation of, 152
repurposed content for, 475
samples of, 58, 59
writer's checklist for, 59–60
budget, in proposals, 241
buffer, for bad news, 109, 470
bulleted lists. *See* lists
business letters. *See* correspondence; letters
business names. *See* organization names
but, comma with, 81, 86
buzzwords, 60–61
as affectation, 25
as gobbledygook, 236

callouts. *See* labels
campus career services, 300
can / may, 62
cannot, 62
capitalization, 62–65. *See also* all-capital letters
of abbreviations, 65
of adjectives of origin, 17–18
after colons, 63, 79
of complimentary closings, 63, 322
after dashes, 117
of events and concepts, 64
of group names, 63
in lists, 327
of organization names, 64
of place names, 63–64
of professional and personal titles, 64–65
of proper nouns, 62–63, 367
in quotations, 63, 465
of salutations, 63
in sentences, 63
in subject lines, 64, 113
of titles of works, 64, 554
captions, with visuals, 317, 398
cardinal numbers, 16, 118
career counselors, 300
case, 65–69, 428–29
agreement and, 27
of appositives, 42–43, 68, 429
objective, 67, 428
possessive, 67–68, 407–9, 428
subjective, 66–67, 428
tests for determining, 43, 68–69, 429
case statement, in grant proposals, 240
catalog, library, 481
categories
for blogs and forums, 54
for FAQs, 187
cause
definition by, 121–22
false, 69–70, 330
cause-and-effect method of development, 69–70, 349
cc: notations, 165, 168, 323
CD-ROM publications
APA documentation of, 138
MLA documentation of, 151
cell phones, 517, 519, 550
center on, 71
centuries, format for writing, 119
chalkboards, 416
channel, 515. *See also* selecting the medium
chapters and sections
capitalization in titles of, 65
in feasibility reports, 190–91
in formal reports, 199–203
in grant proposals, 238–42
in manuals, 334

numbers for, 373
quotation marks for titles of, 294, 464, 555
in résumés, 502–6
in sales proposals, 440–42
in tables of contents, 200
charts. *See also* visuals
flowcharts, 195–97, 579
IEEE documentation of, 144
organizational, 380, 579
in presentations, 416, 418
chat sessions, online, 75–76
check boxes, in forms, 225–26
checklist of the writing process, xxiii–xxiv. *See also* writer's checklists
choppy writing, 528
chronological method of development, 71, 349
sample of, 72
chunking. *See* paragraphs
circular definitions, 120
circumlocution, 94
citation management software, 481
citations, in-text. *See also* documenting sources
APA style, 133, 134–35, 140
in formal proposals, 439
in grant proposals, 240
IEEE style, 133–34
MLA style, 133, 148, 153–54
sample pages, 140, 146, 153
cite / sight / site, 71
claims
adjustment letters for, 19–22
in complaint letters, 90–91
clarity, 71, 73
active voice for, 582
commas for, 84
conciseness and, 73, 93–95
in correspondence, 112–13
defining terms for, 119–20
grammar and, 237
hyphens for, 256
in instructions, 268–69
plain language for, 403–4
semicolons for, 520
in technical writing style, 544
transitions for, 561–63
word choice and, 590
classification, 130–32. *See also* division-and-classification method of development
sample of, 131
clauses, 73–74. *See also* dependent clauses; independent clauses; sentence construction
adjective, 174
commas with, 81
missing subjects in, 526
restrictive and nonrestrictive, 489–90
clichés, 74
and figures of speech, 193
as gobbledygook, 236
climactic order, for emphasis, 169
clip-art images, 157, 160, 416–17
closed-ended questions, 224
closings. *See also* conclusions
for adjustment letters, 22
for application cover letters, 42
for bad-news letters, 109
for correspondence, 112, 322
for e-mail, 167
for international correspondence, 275
for meetings, 345
for presentations, 415
for refusal letters, 472
cloud computing, 519
clustering, 55–56
sample of, 56
coherence, 75
clarity and, 71, 73
outlining and, 381
in paragraphs, 388
plain language and, 404
pronoun references and, 425
unity and, 567
collaborative writing, 75–77
brainstorming and, 55–56
coherence in, 75, 76
conflict and, 77
for environmental impact statements, 178–79
outlining for, 381
professionalism and, 76, 77
for proposals, 434, 440
purpose in, 455
reviewing, xxii, 77

collaborative writing (*continued*)
schedule for, 246, 247
team tasks in, 76–77
technology for, 75–76
for trade journal articles, 558
wikis for, 75–76
writer's checklist for, 77
collective nouns, 367
pronoun-antecedent agreement with, 31, 368–69
subject-verb agreement with, 29, 368–69
colloquialisms
in informal writing, 537
as nonstandard English, 175–76
quotation marks and, 464
colons, 78–79
capitalization after, 63, 79
in citations, 78
for enumeration, 520
before lists, 78, 79, 326–27
with numbers, 78
with quotation marks, 79, 464–65
in salutations, 78, 321
in sentences, 78–79
in titles, 78
unnecessary, 79
color
in brochures, 60
in global graphics, 233, 235
in graphs, 246
in maps, 337
in page design, 316
in warnings, 270
column graphs. *See* graphs
columns
in newsletters, 363
page design for, 315, 316
in tables, 542–43
comma splice, 79–80, 511
commands, 268, 354, 522. *See also* imperative mood
commas, 80–86
with addresses, 84
with adjectives, 19, 83–84
for clarifying, 84
in compound sentences, 523
with conjunctive adverbs, 23, 85
for contrasting, 84
with dashes, 117
in dates, 84, 118
for enclosing elements, 81, 117
with interjections, 83, 274
in international correspondence, 84
for introducing elements, 82–83
for items in series, 83–84, 86
for linking clauses, 23, 81, 85
with names, 85
with nonrestrictive elements, 489–90
with numbers, 84–85, 372
for omissions, 84
with other punctuation, 85
with parentheses, 391
with quotation marks, 83, 393, 464–65
unnecessary, 86
common / mutual, 356
common knowledge, 402
common nouns, 63, 367
communication
global, 232–33, 275–80
listening, 324–26
nonverbal, 419–20
selecting the medium for, xviii–xix, 515–19
comparative form
absolute words and, 17, 179
of adjectives, 17
of adverbs, 23–24
compare / contrast, 87
comparison, 87–88
with absolute words, 17, 179
basis of, 88
incomplete, 35
like and *as* for, 324
comparison method of development, 88–90, 349
samples of, 89–90
complaint letters, 90–91. *See also* adjustment letters; refusal letters
sample of, 91
complement / compliment, 91
complements, 91–92. *See also* objective complements; subjective complements
linking verbs and, 573
sentence construction and, 522

types of, 92
verbals as, 173
complex sentences, 170, 523
compliment / complement, 91
complimentary closings, 63, 322
component content-management systems, 100–101
components, definition by, 122
compose / constitute / comprise, 92–93
compound-complex sentences, 523
compound sentences, 170, 523
compound words, 93
antecedents, 32
case of, 429
commas with, 86
hyphens for, 93, 255
plurals of, 93, 369
possessive, 93, 408
predicates, 86, 523
pronoun case and, 68–69
subject-verb agreement with, 29–30
subjects, 522
comprehension tests, 568
comprise / compose / constitute, 92–93
computer technologies. *See* adapting to new technologies; digital tips
conciseness, 93–95. *See also* wordiness
in abstracts, 9
active voice for, 583
in blogs and forums, 54
in brochures, 57
clarity and, 73
in executive summaries, 184
functional shifts and, 227
in instructions, 268–69
in international correspondence, 275
in minutes of meetings, 350
overdoing, 2–3, 94
subordination for, 539
telegraphic style, 546
writer's checklist for, 94–95
"you" viewpoint and, 107
conclusions, 96–98. *See also* closings
in abstracts, 7–9
false, 69–70
for feasibility reports, 191
for formal reports, 202, 218–19
for grant proposals, 241–42
for newsletter articles, 361
for progress reports, 425
for proposals, 438–39, 442, 453
for reports, 474–75
samples of, 96, 218–19, 453
summary of, 289
for test reports, 550
for trade journal articles, 559
for trip reports, 563
for trouble reports, 564
for white papers, 588
concrete nouns, 367
concrete words. *See* abstract / concrete words
conditional statements, 539
conference calls, 517
confidentiality
blogs and forums and, 54
e-mail and, 164
forms and, 221
instant messaging and, 267
conflict
in collaborative writing, 77
in meetings, 343–45
conjugation of verbs, 576
conjunctions, 98–99. *See also* coordinating conjunctions; correlative conjunctions; subordinating conjunctions
and subject-verb agreement, 29–30
telegraphic style and, 546
types of, 98–99
conjunctive adverbs
for comma splices, 80
commas with, 23, 85
in compound sentences, 523
for linking clauses, 23, 74, 99
list of common, 23, 85, 99
for run-on sentences, 394
semicolons with, 23, 520
connotation / denotation, 99
of synonyms, 540, 552–53
of visuals, 234–35
word choice and, 590
consensus, 99
consequently. See conjunctive adverbs
consistency
in environmental impact statements, 178
in format, 433

consistency (*continued*)
in repetition, 473
in résumés, 491–92
for visuals, 418, 580
in voice, mood, tense, 549, 575
constitute / comprise / compose, 92–93
contacts, personal and professional
lists of, 266, 268
networking and, 299–300
content management, 100–101, 475
context, 101–3
and adapting to new technologies, 13
in application cover letters, 41
assessing, xvi–xviii, 102–3, 409
in bad-news patterns, 109
design and, 313
in forewords, 201
in formal reports, 201
global communication and, 232
global graphics and, 233
listening and, 324
in openings, 103, 112
for proposals, 101, 435
purpose and, 455
in refusal letters, 470
repurposing for, 475
of requests for proposals, 477
scope and, 514
selecting the medium and, 515
signaling, 103
style and, 536
tone and, 556
for visuals, 233, 577
continual / continuous, 103
continuing pages
for letters, 323
for memos, 348
for tables, 544
continuous / continual, 103
contractions, 103–4
apostrophes in, 37, 103–4
in global communication, 275, 279
contrast
commas for, 84
dashes for, 117
contrast / compare, 87
conversational style
in blogs and forums, 53–54
in correspondence, 106–7
in informal writing, 537
nonstandard English, 175–76
cookies, 594
coordinate nouns, possessive case of, 408
coordinate series, 83
coordinating conjunctions, 98
for comma splices, 80
commas with, 81, 86
in compound sentences, 523
for linking clauses, 74, 81, 98
list of, 81, 98
for run-on sentences, 394, 511
semicolons with, 520
in subordination, 539
copy notations (*cc:*, *bcc:*), 165, 166, 168, 323
copyleft Web material, 105, 402
copyright, 104–5. *See also* documenting sources
alternative forms of, 105
ethics in writing and, 54, 104, 105, 181
exceptions to, 104–5
permissions and, 104, 155, 201, 558
plagiarism and, 402
repurposing and, 104–5, 475
for visuals, 155, 157, 398, 580
corporate authors
APA documentation of, 136, 137
IEEE documentation of, 142, 144
MLA documentation of, 149, 150
corporate names. *See* organization names
correlative conjunctions, 99
double negatives and, 156
in parallel structure, 389
correspondence, 105–14. *See also* e-mail; letters; memos; selecting the medium
acceptance / refusal letters (for employment), 9–11
accuracy in, 113–14, 164
acknowledgment letters, 11–12
adjustment letters, 19–22
APA documentation of, 139
application cover letters, 38–42
bad-news patterns for, 109–11

clarity in, 112–13
closings, 112
complaint letters, 90–91
cover letters, 38–42, 114
e-mail, 164–69
emphasis in, 112–13
employment offers and, 9–11, 286–87
ethics in writing and, 166
good-news patterns for, 109, 111
goodwill and, 107–8
headings in, 113
IEEE documentation of, 144, 145
inquiries and responses, 263–65
international, 275–80
letters, 318–23
lists in, 113
memos, 346–48
MLA documentation of, 152
names and titles in, 4–5, 321
openings, 112, 287
order-of-importance method of development for, 376–79
outlining for, 381
point of view in, 406
reference letters, 468–70
refusal letters, 470–72
for reports, 474
resignation letters, 487–89
test reports, 550
thank-you letters, 286–87
transmittals, 114
writer's checklists for, 108–9, 113–14
cost analysis, in sales proposals, 441
sample of, 448
count nouns, 367
adjectives and, 16
articles with, 173
ESL tips for, 172
subject-verb agreement and, 28
cover letters (or transmittals), 114
context in, 103
for e-mail attachments, 165
for faxes, 516
for formal reports, 198, 204
for grant proposals, 239
for meeting agendas, 343
for questionnaires, 459, 462
for résumés, 38–42
for sales proposals, 440–41, 443–44
samples of, 39–41, 115, 204, 344, 443–44, 459
credible / creditable, 114
criteria / criterion, 115
critique, 115
cultural differences. *See also* global communication; global graphics; international correspondence
as context, 102
in directness of messages, 109, 232–33, 275
international correspondence and, 275–80
listening and, 324
visuals and graphics and, 233–35
currency, of sources, 480
curriculum vitae, 491n. *See also* résumés
cutaway drawings. *See* drawings

-d endings, 547, 572
dangling modifiers, 116
active voice for, 582
ambiguity and, 35–36
phrases as, 400, 401
dashes, 117
for emphasis, 117, 171
for enclosing elements, 117, 520
vs. hyphens, 255
data, 118
data, numerical. *See* numerical data
databases
APA documentation of, 137
for employment, 301
IEEE documentation of, 144
MLA documentation of, 150
for periodicals, 481–82
résumés for, 507–8
search strategies, 484
storing search results, 481
dates, 118–19
apostrophes in, 37
capitalization of, 64
commas in, 84, 118
format for writing, 84–85, 118–19
on forms, 224, 225
in headers or footers, 251–52, 315

dates (*continued*)
in international correspondence, 118, 279
in letters, 318–21
numbers in, 371, 373
plurals of, 37
publication, 200
slashes in, 531
in subtitles, 200, 553
datum, 118
days. *See* dates
deceptive language, avoiding, 180–81, 395, 407
decimal numbering system
for headings, 254
for outlines, 382
decimals
commas with, 85
numerals for, 371
periods with, 85, 394
declarative sentences, 524
decreasing-order-of-importance method of development, 349, 379
sample of, 377
defective / deficient, 119
defining terms, 119–20. *See also* definition method of development; definitions
audience and, 46, 121, 235
in executive summaries, 184
glossaries for, 235–36
plain language and, 403–4
technical terminology and, 178, 291
definite / definitive, 120
definite articles, 43–44
definition method of development, 120–23, 349
definitions. *See also* defining terms; word meanings
by analogy, 121
by cause, 121–22
circular, 120
by components, 122
dictionaries for, 126–28
by exploration of origin, 122–23
extended, 121
formal and informal, 119
in glossaries, 235–36
is when / is where, 120
negative, 119–20, 123
opening with, 289
definitive / definite, 120
deletions. *See* omissions
delivery schedules
in requests for proposals, 477
in sales proposals, 441
sample of, 448
delivery techniques, for presentations, 419–20
demonstrative adjectives, 16
and agreement in number, 16, 31–32
with count nouns, 172
demonstrative pronouns, 426–27
denotation, 99, 590
dependent clauses, 73–74
and sentence structure, 523–24
subordinating conjunctions with, 99
subordination of, 538–40
description, 123–25
samples of, 123–24
schematics for, 157
spatial method of development for, 533–34
of vendor, in sales proposals, 442
descriptive abstracts, 7–9
descriptive adjectives, 18
descriptors, in electronic résumés, 508
design. *See* layout and design
desktop publishing software, 317
despite / in spite of, 125–26
detail
in description, 123–25
opening with, 289
development. *See* grant proposals; methods of development
diagnosis / prognosis, 126
dialectal English, 176
dictionaries, 126–28
abridged, 126–27
APA documentation of, 136
ESL, 127
IEEE documentation of, 143
MLA documentation of, 149
for research, 482
subject, 128
unabridged, 127
for usage, 569
for word choice, 590

differ from / differ with, 128
different from / different than, 128
difficult personalities, 344–45
digital object identifier. *See* DOI
digital tips. *See also* adapting to new technologies
  assessing hardware and software, 15
  collaborative software, 75–76
  e-mail attachments, 167
  indexing, 262
  outlining, 383
  PDF files, 595
  proofreading, 433
  scheduling meetings, 341
  storing research results, 481
  styles and format templates, 199
  synchronizing data, 519
  tracked changes, 510
  videoconferencing, 342
direct address, 128
  comma with, 81, 83, 128
  for emphasis, 171
direct objects, 374
  as complements, 92
  gerunds as, 570
  nouns as, 368
  pronoun case and, 67
  transitive verbs and, 374, 573
  verbals as, 173
direct quotations. *See* quotations
direct statements
  for emphasis, 171
  for plain language, 404
directional cues, in Web design, 593
disabilities, people with, 51–52
discreet / discrete, 129
disinterested / uninterested, 129
division-and-classification method of development, 129–32, 349
document design. *See* layout and design
documenting sources, 132–55. *See also* APA documentation; citations, in-text; IEEE documentation; MLA documentation
  abbreviations for, 5
  APA style, 134–41
  bibliographies and, 52
  common knowledge, 402
  copyright and, 105
  drawings and, 157, 580
  ethics in writing and, 155, 580
  in formal reports, 202
  IEEE style, 142–45
  in literature reviews, 329
  MLA style, 148–54
  note-taking and, 366
  paraphrasing and, 390, 402
  photographs and, 398, 580
  plagiarism and, 133, 401–2
  in presentation slides, 416, 580
  in proposals, 439
  purposes of, 132–33
  quotations and, 133, 465, 467
  samples of, 140–41, 147, 153–54
  style manuals for, 133–34, 155
  in tables, 543, 580
  in trade journal articles, 558, 560
  for Web content, 594
document-management systems, 100
DOI (digital object identifier)
  APA citation of, 137
domain names, 485
dots. *See* ellipses
double negatives, 155–56, 406
drafting. *See* writing a draft
drawings, 156–60. *See also* visuals
  ethics in writing and, 157
  functions of, 578
  samples of, 157, 158–59, 160
  writer's checklist for, 159
due to / because of, 161, 186
dummy, in page design, 317

each, 162
  pronoun-antecedent agreement with, 30–31, 162, 430
  subject-verb agreement with, 27, 30, 162 , 430
each other, 427
economic / economical, 162
-ed endings, 547, 572
edited collections
  APA documentation of, 136
  IEEE documentation of, 143
  MLA documentation of, 149
editing. *See also* proofreading; revision
  proofreaders' marks for, 430–31
  writer's checklist for, xxiv

editions, book
APA documentation of, 136
IEEE documentation of, 142
MLA documentation of, 149
educational material, copyright and, 104
effect. *See* cause-and-effect method of development
effect / affect, 24
e.g. / i.e., 162–63
either . . . or
as correlative conjunction, 99
in parallel structure, 389
pronoun-antecedent agreement with, 32
subject-verb agreement with, 29–30
electronic résumés, 301, 507–8
electronic sources. *See also* Internet research
APA documentation of, 137–38
IEEE documentation of, 143–44
MLA documentation of, 150–51
elegant variation, 25
ellipses, 163–164
periods as, 393
in quoted material, 466
elliptical constructions, commas with, 84
elude / refer / allude, 33
e-mail, 164–69. *See also* correspondence
abbreviations in, 3, 165
accuracy in, 164
addresses, 165, 503
APA documentation of, 138, 139
attachments, 165, 167
bad-news patterns for, 109–11
closings for, 167
confidentiality and, 164
design and, 166
functions of, 167, 515–16
hyphens in, 257
IEEE documentation of, 144
interviewing by, 282
managing, 168–69
for memos, 346
MLA documentation of, 150
netiquette, 165
for newsletters, 363
openings for, 112, 287
overload, 168–69
professionalism and, 164–165
for research, 479–80
responding to, 165, 166, 168–69
for résumés, 508
salutations for, 167
samples of, 378, 564
signature blocks for, 167–68
subject line of, 64, 113, 165, 554
vs. text messaging, 550
tone for, 556
writer's checklists for, 165, 168–69
emoticons, 165
emphasis, 169–71
active voice for, 170
clarity and, 73, 112–13
climactic order for, 169
colons for, 78
conjunctions for, 98
in correspondence, 112–13
dashes for, 117, 171
design for, 166
direct statements for, 171
ethics in writing and, 181
figures of speech for, 193
intensifiers for, 17, 273–74
italics for, 292, 294
pace and, 385
parallel structure for, 388
position for, 169
repetition for, 170–71, 473
in résumés, 491
sentence construction and, 170, 521, 529
subordination for, 539
typography for, 171, 314–15
word order and, 524–25
employment agencies, 303
employment process
acceptance / refusal letters, 9–11
application cover letters, 38–42
applications, 304–7
internships, 303–4
job descriptions, 296–98
job interviews, 282–87
job searches, 298–308
reference letters, 468–70

resignation letters, 487–89
résumés, 490–508
returning job seekers, 501–2
salary negotiations, 285, 512–14
volunteering, 299–300, 502
enclosure notations, 165, 322–23
encyclopedias
APA documentation of, 136
IEEE documentation of, 143
MLA documentation of, 149
for research, 482
end notations, in correspondence, 322–23
end punctuation. *See* sentence endings
endnotes. *See* footnotes / endnotes
English as a second language (ESL), 171–75
adjective clauses, 174
adjectives, 17–18
articles, 43–44, 173
audience, xvii–xviii
count nouns, 172
dictionaries, 127
gender, 229
gerunds and infinitives, 173–74
idioms, 258
mass nouns, 172
mood, 355
numbers, 372
opinions, 406
possessive pronouns, 428
present perfect tense, 174
progressive tenses, 174–75, 549
sentence construction, 525
shifts in voice, mood, tense, 575
subjects, 522
voice, 584
English, varieties of, 175–76
colloquial, 175–76
dialectal, 176
localisms, 176
nonstandard, 175–76
slang, 176
standard, 175, 536
ensure / assure / insure, 273
enterprise content-management systems, 101
entry lines and fields, in forms, 225–26
enumeration
colons with, 520
for transitions, 388, 561, 562
environmental impact statements, 176–79
ethics in writing and, 178
equal / unique / perfect, 179
equations. *See* mathematical equations
-er / -est endings, 17, 23–24
-es endings
for plurals, 369, 371, 408
for verbs, 370, 575
-ese endings, 25
ESL. *See* English as a second language (ESL)
essays, quotation marks for titles of, 464, 555
-est endings, 17, 23–24
etc., 179–80
ethics in writing, 180–82
affectation and, 25
bcc: notations and, 166
for blogs and forums, 54
for boilerplate content, 441
copyright and, 104, 155, 157
documenting sources and, 155, 202, 594
for drawings, 157
for environmental impact statements, 178
euphemisms and, 181, 182–83
for FAQs, 187
for formal reports, 202
for forms, 221
graphs and, 244, 577
I / we usage, 406
for instant messaging, 267
job applications and, 307–8
logic errors and, 329, 330
for note-taking, 365
paraphrasing and, 390
passive voice, 180, 583
persuasive writing and, 395
photographs and, 398
plagiarism and, 202, 318, 365
positive writing and, 407
for presentation slides, 416
for questionnaires, 462, 480
for quotations, 463, 465

ethics in writing (*continued*)
for reference letters, 470
for repurposed content, 402, 475
for requests for proposals, 478
for research, 480
for résumés, 492
for sales proposals, 440, 441
for trade journal articles, 558
for trouble reports, 566
for visuals, 398, 580
for Web content, 594
for white papers, 588
writer's checklist for, 181–82
ethnic groups
bias toward, avoiding, 51
capitalization of names of, 63
etymologies, 126. *See also* definitions
euphemisms, 182–83
as affectation, 25
ethics in writing and, 181, 182–83
as gobbledygook, 236
evaluating sources, 485–86. *See also* evidence
every
pronoun-antecedent agreement with, 30–31
subject-verb agreement with, 30
everybody / everyone, 183
pronoun-antecedent agreement with, 31, 183
subject-verb agreement with, 183
evidence
biased or suppressed, 330
evaluating, 69–70, 485–86
except / accept, 9
exclamation marks, 183
commas with, 86
for interjections, 183, 274
exclamatory sentences, 524
executive summaries, 184
in environmental impact statements, 178
in formal reports, 201, 208–9
in proposals, 441, 445
samples of, 208–9, 445
writer's checklist for, 184
experimentation
for research, 479
and technology, 14
explanations
in adjustment letters, 22
in bad-news patterns, 109
explanatory notes, in formal reports, 202
expletives, 184–85
subject position and, 522
wordiness and, 94
explicit / implicit, 185
exploded-view drawings. *See* drawings
exploration of origin, definition by, 122–23
exposition, 185
extended definitions, 121
external proposals, 439–42
external Web sites, 53, 518–19
eye contact, in presentations, 420, 421

Facebook, 301–2, 518
fact, 186
facts, vs. opinions, 186, 331
fair use, 104
fallacies. *See* logic errors
false cause, 69–70, 330
false impressions
and ethics in writing, 180–81
and job applications, 307
FAQs (Frequently Asked Questions), 186–88
ethics in writing and, 187
writer's checklist for, 188
fault, admitting. *See* adjustment letters
faxes, 516
feasibility reports, 188–91
sample of, 189–90
titles for, 553
female / male, 191
few / a few, 191
fewer / less, 192
figuratively / literally, 192
figures, list of, 200–201, 581. *See also* numbering; visuals
figures of speech, 176, 192–94, 544
file sharing, 167
films
APA documentation of, 138
capitalization in titles of, 65, 554
IEEE documentation of, 144
italics for titles of, 294, 554
MLA documentation of, 151

fine, 194
finite verbs, 574
first / firstly, 194
first names, in correspondence, 167, 279, 321
first person, 394–95
  antecedents and, 430
  in narration, 357
  point of view, 405–6
first words. *See* capitalization
Five Steps to Successful Writing, xv–xxii. *See also* writing process
flames, e-mail, 165
flammable / inflammable / nonflammable, 194
flip charts, 416
flowcharts, 195–97, 579. *See also* visuals
  samples of, 195–96
fonts, 313, 593. *See also* typography
footers. *See* headers and footers
footnotes / endnotes. *See also* documenting sources
  in formal reports, 202
  for graphs, 249
  for tables, 543
for example
  vs. *e.g.* / *i.e.*, 162–63
  in sentence fragments, 528
forced choice questions, 224
forceful / forcible, 197
foreign words in English, 197–98. *See also* Latin words
  affectation and, 25, 197–98
  italics for, 197, 294
foreword / forward, 198
forewords, in formal reports, 201
formal definitions, 119
formal internal proposals, 436–39
formal reports, 198–220. *See also* report elements; reports
  abstracts of, 7–9, 200
  back matter, 203
  body of, 201–2
  ethics in writing and, 202
  format for, 199
  front matter, 199–201
  functions of, 474–75
  sample of, 203–20
  technology for, 199
formal style, 536–37. *See also* style
  as affectation, 25
  in correspondence, 106–7, 279
format, 221. *See also* chapters and sections; layout and design
  for activity reports, 425
  for business letters, 318–23
  consistency in, 433
  for external proposals, 439
  for formal reports, 199
  for memos, 346
  for newsletters, 363
  for résumés, 502–8
  templates for, 199, 318
  for titles of works, 554
  for trade journal articles, 560
former / latter, 221
forms, 221–26. *See also* application forms
  ethics in writing and, 221
  samples of, 222–23
forums, Web. *See* blogs and forums
fractions
  numerals vs. words, 371
  slashes in, 531
fragments. *See* sentence fragments
Frequently Asked Questions. *See* FAQs
front matter, for formal reports, 199–201
full adjustments, 21–22
full-block-style letter, 318
  sample of, 319
full justification, 315
full-scale introductions, 290–91
functional résumé, 505–6
  sample of, 499–500
functional shift, 226–27
funding. *See* grant proposals
further. See conjunctive adverbs
fused sentences, 394, 511
future perfect tense, 547, 548–49
future progressive tense, 547, 549
future tense, 548

Gantt charts, 246, 247
garbled sentences, 228. *See also* mixed constructions
gathering information. *See* research

gender, 229. *See also* sexist language
agreement in, 27, 30–31, 229, 429–30
ESL tips for assigning, 229
female / male, 191
in global graphics, 233–35
of nouns and pronouns, 229
unknown, in salutations, 321
general and specific methods of development, 230–31, 349
samples of, 230–31
generalizations, sweeping, 330
genre. *See* selecting the medium
geographic features
capitalization of, 63–64
commas with, 85
maps for, 336, 578
gerund phrases, 401
gerunds, 570, 574
ESL tips for, 173–74
object of, and pronoun case, 67
possessive pronouns with, 408–9
gestures
cultural differences in, 233
in presentations, 420, 421
global communication, 232–33. *See also* cultural differences; international correspondence
context and, 232
idioms and, 258
punctuation for, 235
visuals and graphics for, 233–35
Web content and, 595
writer's checklist for, 232–33
global graphics, 233–35
professionalism and, 234
samples of, 234
glossaries, 235–36
in environmental impact statements, 178
in formal reports, 203
in instructions, 268
in proposals, 434
goals. *See also* purpose
career, 298
in manuals, 334
gobbledygook, 236
as affectation, 25
ethics in writing and, 181
good-news patterns, 109, 111
sample of, 111
good / well, 237
goodwill, establishing
with acknowledgment letters, 11
with adjustment letters, 19–22
blogs and forums for, 53–54
brochures for, 57
in closings, 109
in correspondence, 107–8
in refusal letters, 10, 470, 472
writer's checklist for, 108–9
"you" viewpoint for, 596
Google
and job search, 301–2
search strategies, 483
government agencies
invitation for bids from, 439
job searches and, 303
government publications
APA documentation of, 139
IEEE documentation of, 145
MLA documentation of, 152
as public domain, 105
government specifications, 535
grammar, 237–38
grammar checkers, 431, 510
grant proposals, 238–42. *See also* proposals
writer's checklist for, 242
granularized content-management systems, 100–101
graphics. *See* visuals
graphs, 243–50. *See also* visuals
ethics in writing and, 244, 577
functions of, 578–79
for presentations, 418
for project schedules, 246, 247
samples of, 243–45, 247–48
vs. tables, 243, 542
writer's checklist for, 249–50

had / have, 547, 548, 572
handbooks
for research, 483
for technological tools, 14
hardly, 24, 155
hardware, adapting to new, 13–15
have / had, 547, 548, 572

he / him / his, 65–69, 394–95, 426–30
he / she, 251. *See also* pronoun-antecedent agreement; sexist language
headers and footers, 251–52
on continuing pages, 323, 348
in page design, 315
samples of, 252, 323, 348
headings, 252–54
in brochures, 58
in correspondence, 113, 318, 321
in document design, 315
in forms, 223
in instructions, 270
italics for, 295
levels of, 252, 254, 382–83
in manuals, 333, 334
in meeting minutes, 350
in newsletters, 363
numbering, 254
in outlines, 382–83
parallel structure for, 389
in résumés, 503
in sales proposals, 441
sample of, 253
style for, 253
in tables, 542
in tables of contents, 200, 542
in trade journal articles, 560
in trip reports, 563
typography for, 314
in Web design, 592
writer's checklist for, 254
headlines, in blogs and forums, 54
help menus and manuals, 14. *See also* instructions; manuals
helping verbs, 401, 523, 574
highlighting devices. *See* layout and design; typography
hooks, in openings, 290
however. See conjunctive adverbs
how-to guides, 14. *See also* instructions; manuals
humor
in global communication, 275, 279
malapropisms, 332
quotation marks and, 464
hyperbole, 193
hyperlinks. *See* links
hyphens, 255–57
clarity and, 256
for compound words, 93, 255
with modifiers, 255–56
with numbers, 119, 255–56
with prefixes, 256, 409
with suffixes, 256
for word division, 257
writer's checklist for, 257

I
between you and . . ., 50, 410
vs. *me*, 65–69
me / my / mine, 394–95, 426–29
in résumés, 506
in technical writing style, 405–6
vs. *you*, 107–8
icons, 316–17, 579
idioms, 258, 275, 279, 411
i.e. / e.g., 162–63
IEEE documentation, 133–34, 142–45
for articles in periodicals, 143, 144
for books, 142–43
documentation models, 142–45
for electronic sources, 143–44
for in-text citations, 142, 146
for miscellaneous sources, 144–45
sample pages, 146–47
-ies endings for plurals, 369, 371
if and when, 585
IFB. *See* invitation for bids
illegal / illicit, 259
illusion / allusion, 33
illustrations. *See* visuals
IM. *See* instant messaging
image, business
brochures for promoting, 56–60
in newsletters, 361
imperative mood, 354
for conciseness, 95
for instructions, 268
for manuals, 334
for nonsexist language, 251
imperative sentences, 524. *See also* commands
impersonal point of view, 405–6
implicit / explicit, 185
imply / infer, 259
in / into, 259

in order to, 259
in spite of / despite, 125–26
in terms of, 260
in-text citations. *See* citations
increasing-order-of-importance method of development, 349, 379
  sample of, 378
indefinite adjectives, 17
indefinite articles, 1, 43–44
indefinite pronouns, 427
  one, 375
  possessive case of, 409
  pronoun-antecedent agreement with, 430
  subject-verb agreement with, 28, 430
independent clauses, 73–74
  in comma splices, 80
  connecting with comma and coordinating conjunction, 81
  connecting with conjunctive adverb and semicolon, 23, 85, 99, 519
  in run-on sentences, 394, 511
  and sentence structure, 523–24
indexes to periodicals, 481–82. *See also* subject directories
indexing, 260–63
  for formal reports, 203
  for manuals, 336
  sample of, 261
  technology for, 262
  writer's checklist for, 263
indicative mood, 95, 354–55
indirect objects, 92, 374
  as complements, 92
  nouns as, 368
  pronoun case and, 67
indirect quotations, 463, 465–66. *See also* quotations
indiscreet / indiscrete, 263
industrial specifications, 534
infer / imply, 259
infinitive phrases, 400–401
infinitives, 571–72
  ESL tips for, 173–74
  with helping verbs, 574
  split, 571–72
  subject of, and pronoun case, 67
  to as sign of, 400, 571–72, 574
inflammable / nonflammable / flammable, 194
informal definitions, 119
informal internal proposals, 436
informal reports, 474–75
informal style, 537–38. *See also* technical writing style; style
informal tables, 544
information sources. *See* research
information technology (IT) specialists, 14
informational brochures, 56–60
informational interviews, 300. *See also* interviewing for information
informative abstracts, 7–9
  sample of, 8
informative writing, 185
-ing endings
  gerunds, 570, 574
  for present participles, 572
  in progressive form, 549
initialisms. *See* acronyms and initialisms
initials, 322, 394
inquiries and responses, 263–65
  for job searches, 304
  samples of, 264, 265
  for unsolicited proposals, 440
inside / inside of, 266
inside address, 321
insoluble / insolvable, 266
instant messaging, 266–68
  abbreviations in, 2–3, 266–67
  ethics in writing and, 267
  functions of, 516–17
  sample of, 267
  writer's checklist for, 268
Institutional Review Board (IRB), 480, 558
instructions, 268–73. *See also* manuals
  chronological order for, 71
  for forms, 223–24
  plain language for, 268
  point of view in, 405
  sample of, 271–72
  sequential method of development for, 269–70
  testing, 271, 273, 567
  visuals for, 156–60, 273

warnings in, 183, 270–71
writer's checklist for, 273
insure / ensure / assure, 273
intensifiers, 273–74
adverbs as, 273–74, 352–53
for emphasis, 171
overuse of, 6, 95, 273–74
really and *actually*, 468
very, 576
intensive pronouns, 427
interface, 274
interjections, 274
commas with, 83
exclamation marks with, 183
internal proposals, 436–39
sample of, 437–38
internal Web sites, 53, 518–19
international correspondence, 275–80. *See also* global communication
bad-news patterns for, 109–11
context and, 232
cultural differences and, 232–33, 275
dates in, 118, 279
euphemisms and, 182–83
figures of speech and, 194
good-news patterns for, 109
idioms and, 258, 275, 279
indirect style for, 232, 275
plain language for, 404
punctuation for, 235
salutations for, 275, 279
samples of, 276–78
visuals and graphics for, 233–35
writer's checklist for, 279–80
International Organization for Standardization (ISO) symbols. *See* ISO symbols
International System of Units (SI), 4
Internet. *See* blogs and forums; Internet research; online postings; URLs; Web design; Web sites; writing for the Web
Internet research, 483–85. *See also* electronic sources; library resources; research
evaluating sources, 485–86
for job searches, 300–301
message boards, 14
primary research, 479–80
search engines, 483–84
subject directories, 484–85
writer's checklist for, 484
internships, 303–4
interrogative adverbs, 23
interrogative pronouns, 427
interrogative sentences, 456, 524. *See also* questions
interrupting elements, commas with, 82
interviewing for information, 280–82
for job searches, 300
listening, 281, 324–26
for newsletter articles, 359
professionalism and, 280
questionnaires and, 457
for research, 480
for usability testing, 568
writer's checklist for, 281
interviewing for a job, 282–87. *See also* employment process
application cover letters, 38–42
follow-up procedures, 9–11, 286–87
listening, 285, 324–26
professionalism and, 284
résumés and, 491
salary negotiations and, 285, 512–14
sample thank-you note, 286
interviews
APA documentation of, 139
IEEE documentation of, 144
MLA documentation of, 151, 152
intranet, 57, 518–19
intransitive verbs, 310, 573
introductions, 287–92. *See also* openings
conclusions and, 98
context in, 103
for feasibility reports, 191
for grant proposals, 239
for literature reviews, 328
for manuals, 291–92
for newsletter articles, 361
for presentations, 413–14
for process explanations, 422
for progress reports, 425
for proposals, 436
for reports, 201–2, 210–13, 474
sample of, 210–13

introductions (*continued*)
setting tone with, 556
for specifications, 291–92
for trade journal articles, 559
for white papers, 587–88
introductory elements. *See also* sentence openings
commas with, 82
dangling modifiers as, 116
wordiness and, 95
inverted sentences
for emphasis, 524–25
subject-verb agreement and, 28
for variety, 529
investigative reports, 292
sample of, 293
invitation for bids, 439. *See also* requests for proposals
IRB (Institutional Review Board), 480, 558
irregardless, 473
is when / is where, 120
ISO symbols
for flowcharts, 195
for global communication, 234
for manuals, 335–36
samples of, 195, 234
for warnings, 270–71
it
as expletive, 184–85, 522
and *its*, 394–95, 426
as subject, 522
IT (information technology) specialists, 14
italics, 292, 294–95
for emphasis, 171, 292, 294, 315
for foreign words, 197, 294
for proper names, 294
for subheadings, 295
for titles of works, 294, 554
for words, letters, and numbers, 295
its / it's, 295

jammed modifiers. *See* stacked modifiers
jargon, 296. *See also* technical terminology
as affectation, 25
buzzwords as, 60–61
ethics in writing and, 181
as functional shift, 227
in global communication, 275, 279
as gobbledygook, 236
in manuals, 334
vs. plain language, 403–4
job applications. *See* application forms; job search; résumés
job descriptions, 296–98
in résumés, 505
sample of, 297
writer's checklist for, 298
job interviews. *See* interviewing for a job
job search, 298–308. *See also* employment process; interviewing for a job
advertisements, 302
application cover letters, 38–42
application forms, 304–7
campus career services, 300
employment agencies, 303
ethics in writing and, 307–8
informational interviews, 300
inquiries, 304
internships, 303–4
networking, 299–300
online resources for, 507–8
personal brand and branding, 299–300, 301–2
professionalism and, 301–2
research for, 300–301
résumés, 490–508
trade and professional listings, 302–3
writer's checklist for, 307
job titles
capitalization of, 65
in résumés, 503
journals. *See* articles in periodicals; periodicals; trade journal articles
justification, in page design, 315

key terms. *See also* keyword searches
in abstracts, 559
defining, 119–20
for indexing, 261, 559
repetition of, 170–71, 473, 561

in résumés, 302, 508
in Web content, 592
keys (legends)
for graphs, 249
for maps, 336
for symbols, 195, 581
keyword searches. *See also* key terms
for catalogs and databases, 481–82
for job listings, 302
for search engines, 484
for technical help, 15
kind / type / sort, 16, 31–32
kind of / sort of, 16, 31–32, 309
know-how, 309

labels
for drawings, 159
for flowcharts, 195
for forms, 226
for graphs, 246, 249
for maps, 336
for photographs, 398
laboratory reports, 310
chronological method of development for, 71
for research, 479
sample of, 311–12
vs. test reports, 550
language. *See also* English as a second language (ESL); word choice
biased, 50–52
deceptive, 180–81, 395, 407
plain, 403–5
pretentious, 25–26
sexist, 30–31, 50–51, 251, 429–30
Latin words. *See also* foreign words in English
abbreviations for, 5, 162–63, 179–80
ad hoc, 12–13
quid pro quo, 463
via, 576
latter / former, 221
lay / lie, 310, 312
layout and design, 312–17. *See also* format; Web design
for blogs, 54
for brochures, 57–58
captions, 317
color in, 316
columns, 316
for e-mail, 166, 167
ethics in writing and, 181
for FAQs (Frequently Asked Questions), 188
for forms, 223–26
headers and footers, 251–52, 315
headings, 252–54, 315
for instructions, 270
justification, 315
for letters, 318–23
lists, 316
for manuals, 333
medium and, 476
for newsletters, 363
page-design elements, 315–16
persuasion and, 395
for presentation visuals, 416
for résumés, 491–92
rules, 317
for technical documents, 545
templates for, 199
thumbnails, 317
typography, 313–15
usability testing for, 567–69
of visuals, 316–17, 580
for warnings, 270–71
for white papers, 588
white space, 316, 318
writing process and, xx–xxi
lectures, MLA documentation of, 152. *See also* presentations
left-justified margins, 315
legal cases, italics for titles of, 294, 554
legal terms
as affectation, 25
ethics in writing and, 181
illegal / illicit, 259
party, 392
vs. plain language, 403
quid pro quo, 463
legalese, 236
legends. *See* keys (legends)
lend / loan, 317
length
of paragraphs, 386
of résumés, 491
of sentences, 170, 528–29

less / fewer, 192
letterhead stationery, 318, 319, 516
letters, 318–23. *See also* correspondence; salutations
  body of, 322
  closings for, 112, 322
  formatting, 318–23
  functions of, 516
  headings in, 318, 321
  openings for, 112, 287, 321–22
  samples of, 319–20
letters of the alphabet
  capitalization of, 65
  italics for, 295
  in outlines, 382
  plurals of, 37
library resources, 480–83. *See also* Internet research; research
  catalogs, 481
  databases and indexes, 481–82
  library homepage, 481
  reference works, 482–83
lie / lay, 310, 312
-like, 540
like / as, 324
limiting adjectives, 15–17, 43
line drawings. *See* drawings
line graphs. *See* graphs
LinkedIn.com, 300, 301–2, 518
linking verbs, 66, 573–74
links
  in blog writing, 54
  in electronic résumés, 507
  in Web content, 593, 594
list-hosting service, 363
listening, 324–26
  in interviews, 281, 285
  in meetings, 343
lists, 326–27
  of abbreviations and symbols, in reports, 201
  in brochures, 58
  bulleted, 113, 326–27
  colons before, 78, 79, 326–27
  consistency in, 327
  contact, 266, 268
  in correspondence, 113
  in document design, 316
  of figures and tables, 200–201, 581
  formatting for, 327
  in inquiries, 264
  in instructions, 269
  numbered, 326–27, 393
  parallel structure for, 389
  periods in, 393
  in presentations, 327, 418
  sample of, 326
  in Web design, 476, 592
  writer's checklist for, 327
literally / figuratively, 192
literature reviews, 327–29
  in grant proposals, 240
  sample of, 328
  for trade journal articles, 558
litotes, 193
loaded arguments, 331
loaded sentences, 525
loan / lend, 317
localisms, 176
logic errors, 329–31
  biased or suppressed evidence, 330
  double negatives and, 156
  ethics in writing and, 329, 330
  fact vs. opinion, 186, 331
  false cause, 69–70, 330
  lack of reason, 329
  loaded arguments, 331
  mixed constructions, 351–52
  non sequiturs, 330
  in sentence construction, 527
  sweeping generalizations, 330
long quotations. *See* block quotations
long variants, 25, 236
loose / lose, 331
loose sentences, 524, 529
-ly endings, 24, 255

magazines. *See* articles in periodicals; periodicals
mailing lists, 363
malapropisms, 332
male / female, 191
manuals, 332–36. *See also* instructions
  audience for, 333
  context of, 102
  decimal number heads in, 383
  introductions for, 291–92
  for research, 483
  sections in, 334
  for technological tools, 14

types of, 332–33
usability of, 567–69
warnings in, 183, 336
manuscript preparation, for trade journal articles, 560
maps, 336–38. *See also* visuals
functions of, 578
IEEE documentation of, 144
sample of, 337
writer's checklist for, 336–37
margins
for brochures, 59
for letters, 318, 321
in page design, 315
marketing. *See* promotional writing
mass nouns, 368
articles and, 173
ESL tips for, 172, 173
subject-verb agreement and, 28
mathematical equations, 338–39
numbering, 338
punctuation with, 339
slashes in, 531
technology for, 338
may / can, 62
maybe / may be, 340
me
between you and . . ., 50, 410
vs. *I*, 65–69
and *my / mine*, 65–69, 394–95, 426–29
mean / average / median, 47
measurements
abbreviations for, 4
average / median / mean, 47
in global communication, 280
numerals vs. words, 371
precision of, 11
subject-verb agreement with, 28
units of, 4
media / medium, 340
median / mean / average, 47
media, social. *See* social media
medium. *See* selecting the medium
medium / media, 340
meetings, 340–46. *See also* minutes of meetings
agendas for, 342–43
attendees, 341
closing, 345
conducting, 343–45
conference calls for, 517
conflict in, 343–45
face-to-face, 518
functions of, 518
planning for, 340–43
purpose of, 340
technology for, 341, 518
writer's checklist for, 345–46
memos, 346–48. *See also* correspondence
additional pages for, 348
bad-news patterns for, 109–11
chronological order for, 71
as cover letters, 198, 204, 459
format for, 346
functions of, 346, 516
openings for, 112, 287
order-of-importance method of development for, 376–79
professionalism and, 346
protocols for sending, 346
samples of, 72, 204, 347, 377, 396, 459
subject line of, 64, 113, 554
tone for, 556
transmittals, 114
message boards, for technical help, 14
metaphors, 193
metasearch engines, 484
methods of development, 348–49
cause-and-effect, 69–70
chronological, 71
clarity and, 71, 73
comparison, 88–90
definition, 120–23
division-and-classification, 129–32
general and specific, 230–31
order-of-importance, 376–79
for organization, 379
sequential, 530
spatial, 533–34
writing process and, xx
metonyms, 193
metric system, 4
mind mapping, 55–56
minor sentences, 524
minutes of meetings, 350–51. *See also* meetings
assigning responsibility for, 343

minutes of meetings (*continued*)
chronological order for, 71
sample of, 350
writer's checklist for, 351
misplaced modifiers, 35–36, 353, 400
Miss / Mrs. / Ms., 355
mixed constructions, 351–52. *See also* garbled sentences
MLA documentation, 133, 148–54. *See also* documenting sources
for articles in periodicals, 149, 150
for books, 148–49
documentation models, 148–52
for electronic sources, 150–51
in-text citations, 148, 153
for miscellaneous sources, 151–52
for multimedia sources, 151
sample pages, 153–54, 220
works-cited list, 133, 154
mobile phones, 517, 519, 550
Modern Language Association. *See* MLA documentation
modified-block-style letter, 318
sample of, 320
modifiers, 352–54. *See also* adjectives; adverbs
ambiguous use of, 35–36
dangling, 116
hyphens with, 255–56
misplaced, 35–36, 353
order of, 18
redundant, 93–94
restrictive and nonrestrictive, 489–90
sentence construction and, 521, 522–23
squinting, 354
stacked (jammed), 19, 353
money, numbers for, 371
months. *See* dates
mood, 354–55
ESL tips for, 355
helping verbs and, 574
imperative, 354
indicative, 354–55
shifts in, 575
subjunctive, 354–55
more / most
for comparison, 17, 24, 179
subject-verb agreement with, 28
moreover. See conjunctive adverbs
more than / as much as, 45
most / almost, 34
movies. *See* films
Ms. / Miss / Mrs., 321, 355
multilingual writers. *See* English as a second language (ESL)
multimedia sources
APA documentation of, 138–39
IEEE documentation of, 144
MLA documentation of, 151
multiple audiences, 46–47. *See also* audience
multiple authors
APA documentation of, 135
IEEE documentation of, 142
MLA documentation of, 148
multiple books by same author
APA documentation of, 136
MLA documentation of, 149
multiple-choice questions, 224
multivolume works
APA documentation of, 136
IEEE documentation of, 142
MLA documentation of, 149
musical works, titles of
italics for, 294, 554
quotation marks for, 464, 555
mutual / common, 356

names and titles. *See also* organization names; proper nouns
abbreviations for, 4–5
capitalization of, 64–65
commas with, 85
first names, 167, 321
initials for, 322, 394
in international correspondence, 275, 279
in letters, 321–22
Ms. / Miss / Mrs., 321, 355
on title pages, 200
unknown, 321–22
narration, 357–58
sample of, 358
narrative section, in grant proposals, 240–41. *See also* body
National Institute of Standards and Technology, 4

nationalities
bias toward, avoiding, 51
capitalization of names of, 63
nature, 359
navigational cues, in Web design, 593
needless to say, 359
negative definitions, 119–20, 123
negative messages. *See* bad-news patterns
negatives, double, 155–56, 406
neither . . . nor, 365
as correlative conjunction, 99
double negatives and, 156
in parallel structure, 389
pronoun-antecedent agreement with, 32
subject-verb agreement with, 29–30
netiquette, 165
networking, 299–300, 518
nevertheless. *See* conjunctive adverbs
news releases. *See* press releases
newsletter articles, 359–61. *See also* articles in periodicals
sample of, 360
titles for, 553
writer's checklist for, 361
newsletters, 361–64
blogs as, 57
format and design for, 314, 363
professionalism and, 363
sample of, 362
newspapers. *See* articles in periodicals; periodicals
no, comma with, 81
no one / not one, 364
nominalizations, 364
nominative case. *See* subjective case
non sequiturs, 330
none, 364
nonfinite verbs, 574
nonflammable / flammable / inflammable, 194
nonrestrictive elements, 490. *See also* parenthetical elements
commas with, 81, 489–90
which with, 490, 550, 552
nonstandard English, 175–76
nonverbal communication, 419–20
nor / or, 365
and pronoun-antecedent agreement, 32
and subject-verb agreement, 29–30
not
double negatives and, 155–56
in verb phrases, 401
not only . . . but also, 38, 99
note-taking, 365–67
in active listening, 326
drafting and, 591
ethics in writing and, 365
for interviews, 281–82
for minutes of meetings, 343, 350–51
paraphrasing, 390
plagiarism and, 365
for presentations, 421
quotations and, 465
for research, 479, 480
writer's checklist for, 366–67
notes section, in formal reports, 202
nouns, 367–69
abstract, 367
as adjectives, 19, 368, 408
collective, 29, 367, 368–69
common, 63, 367
compound, 408
concrete, 367
coordinate, 408
count, 16, 28, 172, 367
ESL tips for, 172
functions of, 368
gender of, 229
gerunds as, 574
mass, 28, 172, 368
as objects, 374
participles as, 574
phrases as, 398, 401
plurals of, 369, 408
possessive case of, 67–68, 407–8, 571
pronouns modifying, 429
proper, 62–63, 367
as subjects, 521–22
types of, 367–68
verbals as, 570
number (grammar), 369–70. *See also* subject-verb agreement; pronoun-antecedent agreement

number (word)
vs. *amount*, 36
subject-verb agreement with, 28–29
number-style method of documentation. *See* IEEE documentation
numbered lists. *See* lists
numbering
in decimal headings, 254, 382–83
for figures, 200–201, 373
for maps, 336
for mathematical equations, 338
in outlines, 382–83
for photographs, 398
for tables, 201, 373, 542
numbers, 370–73. *See also* measurements; numerical data
in addresses, 373
as adjectives, 16–17
cardinal, 16, 118
for chapters and volumes, 373
colons with, 78
commas with, 84–85, 372
in dates, 373
ESL tips for, 372
for figures and tables, 373
fractions, 371
hyphens with, 119, 255–56
italics for, 295
in mathematical equations, 338–39
measurements, 371
money, 371
numerals vs. words, 17, 370–71
ordinal, 16, 118, 194
for pages, 373
in parentheses, 373, 391
percentages, 371, 393
periods with, 372, 393
plurals of, 37, 371
slashes with, 531
for time, 372
numerical data
in grant proposals, 241
in graphs, 243–50, 578–79
in tables, 542–44, 578

object of preposition, 374
gerunds as, 570
no colon before, 79
nouns as, 368
pronoun case and, 67, 410
objective case, 67, 428
objective complements, 92, 368
objectives
in grant proposals, 240–41
opening with, 288
in résumés, 503–4
objects, 374. *See also* direct objects; indirect objects; object of preposition
observation, in research, 479–80
of
possessive case using, 407, 409
redundant use of, 266, 383, 411
with *this kind / these kinds / that type / those types,* 16, 31–32
of which / who's / whose, 589
OK / okay, 374
omissions
apostrophes for, 37
commas for, 84
dashes for, 117
ellipses for, 163–64, 466
ethics in writing and, 181
slashes for, 531
telegraphic style and, 546
omnibus words, 570
on / onto / upon, 375
one, 375
one another, 427
one of those . . . who, 375–76
online chat sessions, 75–76
online forms. *See* forms
online postings. *See also* blogs and forums
APA documentation of, 138
MLA documentation of, 151
online resources. *See* Internet research; Web sites
online tutorials, 14
only, 24, 376
open-ended questions, 224
openings. *See also* introductions
for adjustment letters, 19–21
for application cover letters, 41
for bad-news letters, 109
for correspondence, 112
good news in, 109, 111

hooks in, 290
for international correspondence, 275
for investigative reports, 292
for refusal letters, 470–71
routine, 287
for test reports, 550
operator's manuals, 333
opinions
conflicting, 395
ESL tips for stating, 406
vs. facts, 186, 331
point of view for, 406
or / nor, 365
and pronoun-antecedent agreement, 32
and subject-verb agreement, 29–30
oral presentations. *See* presentations
order-of-importance method of development, 349, 376–79
ordinal numbers, 118
as modifiers, 16, 194
spelling out, 371
organization, 379. *See also* methods of development
coherence and, 75
outlining, 380–83
paragraphs and, 386
for presentations, 413–15
for résumés, 491, 502–6
for sales proposals, 440–42
for trade journal articles, 558
writer's checklist for, xxiii
writing process and, xx–xxi
organization description, in grant proposals, 241
organization names
abbreviations of, 3–4
ampersands in, 4, 36
capitalization of, 64
as singular nouns, 369
on title pages, 200, 441
organizational charts, 380, 579
organizational newsletters, 361
organizational sales pitch, in proposals, 442
sample of, 452
origins, definitions exploring, 122–23
orphans, 316
our / ours, 394–95, 426–29
outcomes, in grant proposals, 240–41
outlining, 380–83
abstracts and, 9
brainstorming and, 55–56
for clarity, 71, 73
coherence and, 75
drafting and, 380–83, 387, 591
headings in, 252–54
and method of development, 349
numbers in, 254
for organization, 379, 381
parallel structure for, 382
technology for, 383
for trade journal articles, 558
types of, 381, 387
unity and, 567
visuals in, 379, 382, 580
for white papers, 587
writing process and, xx–xxi
outside [of], 383
over [with], 384
overhead transparencies, 416
overview
in manuals, 334
in presentations, 413, 414
ownership. *See* possessive case

pace, 385
clarity and, 73
in presentations, 420
regulating, 260, 529
page design. *See* layout and design
page numbers, 373
commas with, 372
in formal reports, 200
in headers or footers, 251, 315
in indexes, 261
paintings, italics for titles of, 294, 554
pamphlets
APA documentation of, 139
IEEE documentation of, 145
italics for titles of, 294, 554
MLA documentation of, 152
panels, brochure, 58
paragraphs, 385–88
coherence in, 75, 388
drafting, 387, 591
in e-mail, 166

paragraphs (*continued*)
functions of, 385
length of, 386
outlining, 381, 387
topic sentence of, 385–86
transitions and, 561–63
unity in, 388, 567
in Web content, 592
parallel structure, 388–90
with *both . . . and*, 54
faulty parallelism, 389–90
for headings, 254
in lists, 327
for nonsexist language, 51
in outlines, 382
in sentence construction, 525
paraphrasing, 390
in active listening, 325
documenting sources and, 133, 402
ethics in writing and, 390
indirect quotations as, 463
in meeting minutes, 350
note-taking and, 365
parentheses, 391
brackets within, 55
commas with, 85, 391
for enclosing elements, 117, 520
in mathematical equations, 339
numbers in, 373, 391
periods with, 391, 393
parenthetical citations. *See* citations, in-text
parenthetical elements
brackets for, 54, 391
capitalization of, 65
commas with, 82, 489–90
dashes for, 117, 520
nonrestrictive elements as, 489–90
parentheses for, 391, 520
for sentence variety, 529
part-by-part method of comparison, 88
partial adjustments, 21, 22
participial phrases, 399–400
participles, 572, 574
ESL tips for, 18
parts of speech, 392
party, 392
passive voice, 583–84
vs. active voice, 576, 581–82
bad news and, 110–11
ethics in writing and, 180, 583
infinitives and, 571
in laboratory reports, 310
responsibility and, 180, 583
in technical writing, 545
wordiness of, 95, 582
past participles, 18, 572
past perfect tense, 547, 548
past progressive tense, 547, 549
past tense, 174, 547
PDF files, 508, 595
per, 392
percent / percentage, 393
percentages, numbers in, 371
perfect / equal / unique, 179
perfect participles, 572
perfect tense, 547
periodic sentences, 524, 529
periodicals. *See also* articles in periodicals
currency of, 480
indexes to, 481–82
italics for titles of, 294, 464, 554
periods, 393–94
with abbreviations, 3
commas with, 85
with ellipses, 163–64
with numbers, 372
with parentheses, 391, 393
period faults, 394
with quotation marks, 393, 464
for run-on sentences, 394
permissions, for copyrighted material, 54, 104, 201, 558
person, 394–95. *See also* point of view
agreement in, 27, 574–75
in narration, 357
point of view and, 405–6
pronouns and, 430
person / party, 392
personal brand, and job search, 299–300, 301–2
personal communications
APA documentation of, 139
IEEE documentation of, 145
MLA documentation of, 152
personal names and titles. *See* names and titles

personal pronouns, 426–29
antecedents and, 430
forms of, 394–95
point of view and, 405–6
personalities, difficult, 344–45
personification, 194
persuasion, 395–96
in application cover letters, 38
ethics in writing and, 395
in grant proposals, 238, 240–41
in inquiry letters, 263
in openings, 112, 290
in proposals, 433, 435
in résumés, 492
sample of, 396
in white papers, 586–87
"you" viewpoint and, 596
phenomenon / phenomena, 397
photographs, 397–98. *See also* visuals
ethics in writing and, 398
functions of, 578
phrases, 398–401
commas with, 81–82
functions of, 398
gerund, 401
infinitive, 400–401
noun, 401
participial, 399–400
prepositional, 399
restrictive and nonrestrictive, 489–90
verb, 401
pictorial symbols. *See* symbols
picture graphs. *See* graphs
pie graphs. *See* graphs
place names. *See* geographic features
plagiarism, 401–2. *See also* copyright
consequences of, 202
documenting sources and, 133
ethics in writing and, 181, 202, 402
note-taking and, 365
repurposing and, 475
plain language, 403–5
clarity and, 71, 73
for environmental impact statements, 178
for instructions, 268
point of view and, 406
positive writing and, 406–7
for Web content, 592
writer's checklist for, 404
plain-text résumés, 507–8
planning, in collaborative writing, 76. *See also* outlining; preparation
plays, titles of
capitalization of, 64, 554
italics for, 294, 554
pluperfect, 548
plurals. *See also* number (grammar)
of abbreviations, 3, 37
apostrophes for, 37
of compound words, 93, 369
of foreign words, 197
of nouns, 369
of numbers, 37, 371
possessive case of, 67–68, 408
podcasts
APA documentation of, 138
MLA documentation of, 151
poems, titles of
italics for, 294, 554
quotation marks for, 555
point of view, 405–6. *See also* "you" viewpoint
consistent use of, 73, 388
for correspondence, 107–8
ethics in writing and, 406
in narration, 357
person and, 394–95
politeness
in correspondence, 108
in global communication, 275, 279
in job interviews, 285
in meetings, 343–45
portfolios, for résumés, 506
position, and emphasis, 169
position descriptions. *See* job descriptions
positive writing, 406–7
for defining terms, 119–20
for double negatives, 156
ethics in writing and, 407
in job applications, 307
and plain language, 404
"you" viewpoint, 596
possessive adjectives, 16, 172
possessive case, 407–9
apostrophes for, 37, 407–9

possessive case (*continued*)
for compound words, 93
ESL tips for, 428
of nouns, 67–68, 407–8
of plurals, 67–68
of pronouns, 67–68, 407, 408–9, 428
post hoc, ergo propter hoc, 330
postal abbreviations, 6, 321
posting to the Web. *See* blogs and forums
PowerPoint. *See* presentation software
practicing, for presentations, 419, 421
precision / accuracy, 11
predicate adjectives, 18
predicate nominative, 523
predicates, 522–23
complements in, 92
preface, in formal reports, 201
prefixes, 409
affectation and, 25
hyphens with, 256, 409
preparation, 409–10
analyzing audience needs, 46, 409
determining purpose, 455
determining scope, 514–15
for information interviews, 280–81
for job interviews, 282–84
for research, 479
for specifications, 534
for trade journal articles, 557–58
for white papers, 587
writer's checklists for, xxiii, 410
writing process and, xvi–xix
prepositional phrases, 399
commas with, 86
as modifiers, 410
objects and, 374
overuse of, 399
showing possession, 407, 409
prepositions, 410–11. *See also* object of preposition
and agreement in number, 16, 31–32
in idioms, 258
present participle, 18, 572
present perfect tense, 547, 548
ESL tips for, 174
infinitives and, 571
present progressive tense, 547
ESL tips for, 174–75, 549
present tense, 547, 548
ESL tips for, 175
infinitives and, 571
for instructions, 268
presentation software, 416–17
presentations, 412–21
anxiety and, 421
audience for, 412–13
delivery techniques for, 419–20
ethics in writing and, 416
lists in, 326–27, 418
order-of-importance method of development for, 376–79
practicing, 419, 421
professionalism and, 418
purpose of, 412
research for, 413
slides in, 416–17
structuring, 413–15
technology for, 416
typography for, 418
visuals for, 416–17
writer's checklists for, 418, 421
pretentious language. *See* affectation
previews, in introductions, 291
primary research, 479–80
principal / principle, 421
privacy statements, for Web sites, 594
problem statement
opening with, 288
in presentations, 413
in proposals, 434, 436, 441
in white papers, 587–88
process explanation, 422. *See also* writing process
flowcharts for, 195–97, 579
instructions, 268–73
sample of, 545
sequential method of development for, 530
product description
in brochures, 57
in sales proposals, 441, 446
sample of, 446
in white papers, 586
professional brand, and job search, 299–300, 301–2
professional journals. *See* trade journal articles; trade journals

professional organizations, online, 301
professionalism notes
acceptance / refusal letters, 10
adjustment letters, 22
application cover letters, 38
biased language, 50
collaborative writing, 76, 77
e-mail, 164–65
global graphics, 234
interviewing for information, 280
interviewing for a job, 284
job search, 301–2
memos, 346
newsletters, 363
presentations, 418
proofreading, 432
résumés, 504, 507
style, 537–38
telegraphic style, 546
text messaging, 550
visuals, 234
prognosis / diagnosis, 126
progress and activity reports, 422–25
samples of, 423–24
titles for, 553
progressive tense, 547
ESL tips for, 174–75, 549
project description
in grant proposals, 240–41
in requests for proposals, 477
in sales proposals, 441
project management, for proposals, 434
projection, in presentations, 420
promotional writing
blogs and forums, 53–54
brochures, 56–60
newsletters, 362
white papers, 586–88
pronoun-antecedent agreement, 27, 30–32. *See also* agreement
with collective nouns, 31, 368–69
with compound antecedents, 32
with *data / datum*, 118
with *each / every*, 30–31, 162
with *everybody / everyone*, 31, 183
in gender, 30–31, 229, 429–30
with *he / she*, 229
with indefinite pronouns, 430
with *none*, 364
in number, 27, 31–32
with possessive pronouns, 428
with *this / that / these / those*, 16, 31–32
pronoun reference, 35, 425–26. *See also* antecedents
pronouns, 426–30. *See also* personal pronouns; pronoun-antecedent agreement
as adjectives, 16
case of, 65–69, 428
compound, 68–69, 429
demonstrative, 426–27
gender of, 30–31, 229, 429–30
indefinite, 409, 427
intensive, 427
interrogative, 427
number and, 31–32, 430
as objects, 67
person and, 394–95, 430, 575
plurals of, 370
point of view and, 405–6
possessive, 67–68, 408–9, 571
reciprocal, 427
reflexive, 427
relative, 427
sexist language and, 30–31, 51, 251, 429–30
as subjects, 66–67, 521
telegraphic style and, 546
for transitions, 561
pronunciations, in dictionaries, 126
proofreaders' marks, 430–31
proofreading, 431–33
application cover letters, 42
e-mail, 164
professionalism and, 432
proofreaders' marks, 430–31
résumés, 492
revision and, 510
technology for, 433
writer's checklist for, 432
proper nouns, 367
capitalization of, 62–63
italics for, 298
proposals, 433–53. *See also* grant proposals; requests for proposals; sales proposals
appendixes for, 38

proposals (*continued*)
audience and purpose for, 434
conclusions, 96–98
context in, 101, 435
cover letters for, 114
description of, in requests for proposals, 477
documenting sources in, 439
environmental impact statements for, 176–79
ethics in writing and, 440, 441
executive summaries in, 184
external, 439–42
evaluation criteria for, 477
feasibility reports for, 188–91
formal, 436–39
informal, 436
internal, 436–39
persuasive writing for, 433, 435
project management for, 434
research, 238–42
sales, 440–42
samples of, 96, 437–38, 443–53
solicited and unsolicited, 439–40
titles for, 553
writer's checklist for, 435
protocol
method of usability testing, 568
for sending memos, 346
pseudo- / quasi-, 454
public domain, 105, 476
publication clearance
for trade journal articles, 560
for white papers, 588
publication dates. *See also* dates
in headers or footers, 251, 315
in report titles, 200, 553
publishing. *See* trade journal articles
punctuation, 454
apostrophes, 37
brackets, 55
colons, 78–79
commas, 80–86
dashes, 117
ellipses, 163–64
exclamation marks, 183
for global communication, 235
hyphens, 255–57
with mathematical equations, 339
parentheses, 391
periods, 393–94
question marks, 456–57
quotation marks, 463–65
semicolons, 519–21
slashes, 531
purpose, 455
audience and, 46
of brochures, 56–57
clarity and, 71
design and, 313
establishing, xvi, 410
for feasibility reports, 189–90
of introductions, 290–91
of listening, 325
in manuals, 334
of meetings, 340
for presentations, 412
of proposals, 434
repurposing, 475–76
for requests for proposals, 477
scope and, 514
selecting the medium and, 515
style and, 106, 536
tone and, 556
unity and, 567
usability testing and, 567–68
visuals and, 577

quasi- / pseudo-, 454
question marks, 456–57
commas with, 85
questionnaires, 457–63. *See also* forms
ethics in writing and, 462, 480
sample of, 459–61
for usability testing, 568
writer's checklist for, 462–63
questions
in forms, 224
frequently asked (FAQs), 186–88
in inquiry letters, 264
for interviewing for information, 281
in job application forms, 307–8
in job interviews, 284–85
punctuation for, 456–57
for questionnaires, 458, 462
for research, 480
rhetorical, 413, 510, 553

for trade journal articles, 557
for transitions, 561, 562
wording, 224
quid pro quo, 463
quotation marks, 463–65. *See also* quotations
for direct quotations, 463–65
ethics in writing and, 463
punctuation with, 183, 464–65, 521
for titles of works, 294, 464, 555
for words and phrases, 464
quotations, 465–67. *See also* citations, in-text; documenting sources
block, 135, 148, 467
capitalization of, 63, 465
colons with, 79, 464–65
commas with, 83, 86, 464–65
direct, 463–65
ellipses for omissions in, 163–64, 466
ethics in writing and, 463, 465
incorporating into text, 467
indirect, 463, 465–66
inserting words into, 55, 466
long, 135, 148, 467
in note-taking, 365, 366, 479
opening with, 290, 414
paraphrasing, 390, 402
periods in, 393, 464
plagiarism and, 401–2, 465
question marks with, 457
quotation marks with, 463–65
within quotations, 464
semicolons with, 464–65, 521
sic for errors in, 55, 466–67

racial groups
bias toward, avoiding, 51
capitalization of names of, 63
radio programs
APA documentation of, 138–39
MLA documentation of, 151
quotation marks for titles of, 464, 555
ragged-right margins, 315
raise / rise, 468
rambling sentences, 526–27
ranked-choice questions, 224
readers, 468. *See also* audience
really, 468
reason is [because], 468
reasoning. *See* logic errors
reciprocal pronouns, 427
recommendation letters. *See* reference letters
recommendation reports, 188, 292
recommendations
in abstracts, 7
in conclusions, 97
in cover letters, 441
in feasibility reports, 191
opening with, 289
in reports, 202, 218–19, 474
samples of, 96, 218–19
in test reports, 550
redundancy. *See also* repetition
with abbreviations, 3
eliminating, 93–94, 95
of and, 266, 383, 411
one and, 375
reason is [because], 468
up and, 411, 567
refer / allude / elude, 33
reference letters, 468–70
ethics in writing and, 470
sample of, 469
reference works, 482–83
abbreviations in, 5
references. *See also* reference letters
in job applications, 307
in résumés, 506
references list (APA), 133. *See also* APA documentation; documenting sources
documentation models for, 135–39
in formal reports, 202
in grant proposals, 240
sample page, 141
in trade journal articles, 560
reflexive pronouns, 427
refusal letters, 470–72
bad-news patterns for, 109–11
context and, 102
for employment offers, 10–11
samples of, 11, 471
regarding / with regard to, 472–73
regardless, 473
regionalisms, 176
rejections. *See* bad-news patterns; refusal letters

relative adjectives, 94
relative pronouns, 427
  in adjective clauses, 174
  for connecting clauses, 74
  in sentence fragments, 527
  subject-verb agreement with, 29
  in subordination, 539
  wordiness and, 94
religious groups
  bias toward, avoiding, 51
  capitalization of names of, 63
repetition, 473–74
  for emphasis, 170–71, 473
  for transitions, 473, 561
  wordiness from, 95, 474
report elements, 474. *See also* layout and design; reports
  abstract, 7–9, 200, 206
  appendixes, 38, 203
  back matter, 203
  bibliography, 52, 203
  body, 201–2, 213–17
  conclusion, 96–98, 202, 218–19
  cover letter, 114, 198, 204
  executive summary, 184, 201, 208–9
  explanatory notes, 202
  foreword, 201
  front matter, 199–201
  glossary, 203, 235–36
  headers and footers, 251–52, 315
  headings, 252–54, 315
  index, 203, 260–63
  introduction, 201–2, 210–13, 287–91
  list of abbreviations and symbols, 201
  list of figures and tables, 200–201
  page numbers, 200
  preface, 201
  problem statement, 288
  recommendations, 202, 218–19
  references / works-cited list, 202, 220
  samples of, 203–20
  table of contents, 200, 207, 542
  text, 202
  title, 553–55
  title page, 200, 205
  visuals, 316–17, 397–98
reports, 474–75. *See also* report elements
  activity, 424, 425
  APA documentation of, 139
  feasibility, 188–91
  formal, 198–220
  IEEE documentation of, 145
  investigative, 292
  laboratory, 310
  MLA documentation of, 152
  progress, 422–25
  quotation marks for titles of, 555
  recommendation, 188, 292
  test, 550
  tone for, 556
  trip, 563
  trouble, 563–66
repurposing, 475–76
  boilerplate material, 104–5
  and content management, 100
  ethics in writing and, 476
reputation, personal, 299–300
requests for proposals, 476–78. *See also* invitation for bids
  ethics in writing and, 478
  format for, 439
  government specifications in, 535
  requirements in, 238–42, 439
research, 479–87. *See also* documenting sources; Internet research; library resources
  for collaborative writing, 76–77
  ethics in writing and, 480
  evaluating sources, 485–86
  formal reports of, 198–220
  interviews, 280–82
  for job interviews, 282–83
  laboratory reports, 310
  literature reviews, 327–29, 558
  methods of, xix
  for newsletters, 359, 363
  note-taking for, 365–67
  observation, 479–80
  for presentations, 413
  primary, xix, 479–80
  proposals, 238–42
  questionnaires for, 457–63
  reference works for, 482–83
  secondary, xix, 480

for specifications, 534
strategies, 480–85
technology for, 481–82, 483–84
for trade journal articles, 558
writer's checklist for, xxiii
writing process and, xix–xx
resignation letters, 487–89
samples of, 487, 488
respective / respectively, 489
response letters. *See* inquiries and responses
responses
to e-mail, 165, 166, 168–69
in form design, 224
to inquiries, 265
to job-interview questions, 285
in manuals, 335
responsibility
ethics in writing and, 180, 583
statement of, in sales proposals, 441, 451
restrictive and nonrestrictive elements, 489–90. *See also* parenthetical elements
résumés, 490–508
application cover letters and, 38–42, 491
background and, 501
electronic, 507–8
e-mail and, 508
ethics in writing and, 492
length of, 491
organization for, 502–6
plain-text, 507–8
posting online, 301
professionalism and, 504, 507
for returning job seekers, 501–2
salary negotiations and, 507, 512
samples of, 492–500
scannable, 507–8
sections in, 502–6
return address, in letters, 318
returning job seekers, 501–2
reviewing, xxii, 77, 178–79. *See also* literature reviews
revision, 508–10
in collaborative writing, 77
proofreading and, 431–32
technology for, 510
writer's checklists for, xxiv, 509–10
writing process and, xxi–xxii
RFP. *See* requests for proposals
rhetorical questions, 510
opening with, 413, 510
in titles, 510, 553
rise / raise, 468
Roman numerals, in outlines, 382
rules
in page design, 317
in tables, 543
run-on sentences, 394, 511

-s endings
for plurals, 369, 371, 408
for verbs, 370, 575
salary negotiations, 512–14
acceptance / refusal letters (for employment) and, 9–10
benefits and job perks, 513–14
job applications and, 307
job interviews and, 285, 512–13
research for, 301
résumés and, 507, 512–13
sales brochures, 56–60
sales proposals, 440
conclusions for, 96–98, 442
ethics in writing and, 440, 441
repurposed content for, 441, 475
sample of, 443–53
structure for, 440–42
salutations
in business letters, 321
capitalization in, 63
colons in, 78
commas in, 85
for e-mail, 167
first names in, 167, 279, 321
for international correspondence, 275, 279
for unknown gender, 321
sans serif typeface, 314, 593
scarcely, 155
schedules
charting, 246
chronological order for, 71
for collaborative writing, 76, 246
delivery, in proposals, 441, 448, 477

schedules (*continued*)
sample of, 247
work, in grant proposals, 241
scheduling meetings, technology for, 341
schematic diagrams. *See* drawings
scholarly abbreviations, 5
scope, 514–15
determining, xviii, 410
of environmental impact statements, 177
in introduction, 288
in literature reviews, 329
of white papers, 587
of work, in requests for proposals, 477
screen names, 266
screening
in graphs, 243, 246
in maps, 337
in page design, 316
sculptures, italics for titles of, 294, 554
search engines, 483–84
second pages. *See* continuing pages
second person, 394–95. *See also* "you" viewpoint
antecedents and, 430
point of view, 405
secondary research, 480
sections. *See* chapters and sections
selecting the medium, 515–19
repurposed content and, 476
scope and, 515
technology for, 519
writing process and, xviii–xix
-self / -selves, 427
semi- / bi-, 50
semicolons, 519–21
for clarity, 520
for comma splices, 80
in compound sentences, 523
with conjunctive adverbs, 23, 85
for items in series, 83, 85
for linking independent clauses, 23, 519
with quotation marks, 464–65, 521
for run-on sentences, 394, 511
with transitions, 520
sentence construction, 521–25. *See also* sentence faults; sentence types
clauses, 73–74
coherence and, 403–4
effective, 524–25
elliptical, 84
emphasis and, 170, 521
ESL tips for, 522, 525
in formal style, 536
for global communication, 279
predicates, 522–23
stylistic use, 524
subject-verb-object pattern, 522, 524–25
subjects, 521–22
variety in, 528–30
sentence endings
in lists, 327
within parentheses, 391, 393
prepositions at, 411
punctuation for, 183, 393, 456–57
sentence faults, 526–27
comma splices, 80
faulty logic, 527
faulty subordination, 526
fragments, 527–28
garbled sentences, 228
loaded sentences, 525
missing subjects, 526
missing verbs, 527
mixed constructions, 351–52
period faults, 394
rambling sentences, 526–27
run-on sentences, 394, 511
sentence fragments, 527–28
with participles, 572
period faults, 394
sentence openings. *See also* introductory elements
also at, 34
commas with, 82
conjunctions as, 98
dangling modifiers at, 116
numbers at, 370–71
sentence outlines, 381
sentence types
complex, 523
compound, 523
compound-complex, 523

declarative, 524
emphasis and, 170
exclamatory, 524
imperative, 524
interrogative, 524
loose, 524, 529–30
minor, 524
periodic, 524, 529–30
simple, 170, 523
sentence variety, 170, 528–30. *See also* sentence types; subordination
sequential method of development, 349, 530
in flowcharts, 195–97
in instructions, 269–70
in narration, 357
series of items
commas with, 83–84, 86
etc. with, 179–80
parallel structure for, 390
question marks with, 456
semicolons with, 83, 520
serif typeface, 314
service, 530
service manuals, 333
set / sit, 530–31
sexist language, 50–51. *See also* biased language
female / male, 191
imperative mood for avoiding, 251
Ms. / Miss / Mrs., 321, 355
occupational descriptions and, 51
parallel terms for avoiding, 51
and pronoun-antecedent agreement, 30–31, 429–30
pronoun usage and, 51, 251
shading. *See* screening
shall / will, 531, 548
she / he, 251. *See also* pronoun-antecedent agreement; sexist language
she / her / hers, 65–69, 394–95, 426–30
shifts
functional, 226–27
in mood, tense, or voice, 549, 575
ships, italics for names of, 294
short stories, quotation marks for titles of, 464
SI (International System of Units), 4
sic, 5, 55, 466–67
sight / site / cite, 71
signatures
for e-mails, 167–68
for letters, 322
for memos, 346
similes, 194
simple sentences, 170, 523
since / as / because, 44–45
single-source publishing, 475n
sit / set, 530–31
site / cite / sight, 71
site preparation, in sales proposals, 441
sample of, 449
slang
as nonstandard English, 176
quotation marks and, 464
slashes, 531
slides, for presentations, 416–17
sample of, 417
so / so that / such, 532
social media
and job search, 299–300, 301–2
and professional networking, 518
software. *See* adapting to new technologies; digital tips
solicited proposals, 439
solutions, in sales proposals, 441
sample of, 447
some / somewhat, 532
some time / sometime / sometimes, 532
songs. *See* musical works, titles of
sort / kind / type, 16, 31–32
sort of, 16, 31–32, 309
source lines, for visuals, 249, 543, 580
sources, citing. *See* citations, in-text; documenting sources
sources, of information. *See* research
spacing
for brochures, 59
for forms, 226
for letters, 318, 321
white space, 316, 318
spam, e-mail, 165
spatial method of development, 349, 533–34
sample of, 533
special-purpose manuals, 333

specific-to-general method of development, 231, 349
sample of, 231
specifications, 534–35
decimal number heads for, 254
government, 535
industrial, 534
introductions for, 291–92
speeches, MLA documentation of, 152. *See also* presentations
spell checkers, 431, 510, 535
spelling, 535
dictionaries for, 126
hyphens and, 256
split infinitives, 571–72
squinting modifiers, 354
stacked modifiers, 19, 236, 353
standard English, 175, 536. *See also* grammar; usage
statement of need, in grant proposals, 240
statistics. *See* numerical data
status reports. *See* progress and activity reports
steps. *See* instructions; process explanation; sequential method of development
stereotypes. *See* biased language; sexist language
strata / stratum, 535
stubs, in tables, 543
style, 536–38. *See also* plain language; technical writing style; telegraphic style
contractions and, 104
formal and informal, 536–38
professionalism and, 537–38
standard vs. nonstandard English, 175–76
writer's checklist for, 538
style manuals, 133–34, 155
stylistic use, in sentence construction, 524
subheadings. *See* headings
subject dictionaries, 128
subject directories, 484–85
subject lines
capitalization in, 64, 113
for e-mail, 113, 165, 554
in letters, 321–22
for memos, 113, 554
for test reports, 550
for trip reports, 563
for trouble reports, 563–64
subjects, 521–22. *See also* subject-verb agreement
active-voice naming, 582
compound, 522
ESL tips for, 522
gerunds as, 570
missing, 526, 527
nouns as, 368
position of, 522
subject-verb agreement, 26–30, 574–75. *See also* agreement
with abstract nouns, 29
with collective nouns, 29, 368–69
with compound subjects, 29–30
with *data / datum*, 118
with *each / every*, 30, 162
with *everybody / everyone*, 183
with indefinite pronouns, 28, 430
with intervening words and phrases, 27
with inverted word order, 28
with measurements, 28
with *none*, 364
with *nor / or*, 365
with *number*, 28–29
with *one of those . . . who*, 375–76
with subjective complements, 28
with *this / that / these / those*, 16
with titles of works, 29
with *who / which / that*, 29
subject-verb-object pattern, 522, 524–25
subjective case, 8, 66–67
subjective complements, 92
adjectives as, 18
gerunds as, 570
nouns as, 368
pronouns as, 66
subject-verb agreement with, 28
subjunctive mood, 354–55
subordinate clauses, 73–74. *See also* dependent clauses
subordinating conjunctions
for connecting clauses, 74, 99
list of common, 99

in sentence fragments, 527
for subordination, 539
subordination, 538–40
bad news and, 109
for clarity, 73
for comma splices, 80
for conciseness, 94
effective, 73–74, 525
faulty, 526
vs. parentheses, 391
for run-on sentences, 511
for sentence variety, 528, 539
subscription newsletters, 362
substantives, 522
such / so / so that, 532
such as, in sentence fragments, 528
suffixes, 540
affectation and, 25
hyphens with, 256
summaries
abstracts and, 7–9
in conclusions, 96, 97
executive, 184
in grant proposals, 239
in meeting minutes, 350
for note-taking, 365, 465
opening with, 289
for transitions, 561
summary list, in manuals, 333
superlative form
of adjectives, 17
of adverbs, 23–24
supplement / augment, 47
supporting documents. *See* appendixes
surveys. *See* questionnaires
sweeping generalizations, 330
symbols
in flowcharts, 195–97
functions of, 579
for global communication, 233–35
for graphs, 246, 250
keys for, 581
list of, in reports, 201
in manuals, 335–36
proofreaders' marks, 430–31
samples of, 196
standardized, 195–97, 335–36
in tables, 542–44
for warnings, 270–71
synonyms, 540–41
coordinated, 94
for defining terms, 119
in dictionaries, 126
repetition and, 473
in thesaurus, 552–53
word choice and, 590
syntax, 541

tables, 542–44. *See also* visuals
for comparisons, 88
functions of, 578
vs. graphs, 243, 542
informal, 544
list of, 201, 581
numbering, 201, 373, 542
samples of, 90, 543
screening (shading) in, 316
in trade journal articles, 559
tables of contents, 542
decimal headings in, 254
for FAQs, 187
in formal reports, 200, 207
in newsletters, 363
parallel structure for, 389
sample of, 207
in white papers, 587
taglines, in résumés, 492, 503–4
sample of, 496
tags, Web, 54
team writing. *See* collaborative writing
technical manuals. *See* manuals
technical terminology
affectation and, 25
audience and, 545
defining for readers, 178, 291
in environmental impact statements, 178
ethics in writing and, 181
in global communication, 279
in glossaries, 235–36
in instructions, 268
jargon, 296
in manuals, 333, 334
plain language for, 403–4
in proposals, 434
in white papers, 587
word choice and, 590

technical writing style, 185, 544–45. *See also* IEEE documentation; style
ethics in writing and, 181
plain language and, 403–4
sample of, 545
technology. *See* adapting to new technologies; digital tips
teleconferences, 517
telegraphic style, 546
caution with, 94
in instructions, 269
professionalism and, 546
telephone calls, 282, 517
television programs
APA documentation of, 138–39
italics for titles of, 294, 554
MLA documentation of, 151
quotation marks for titles of, 464, 555
temporary employment agencies, 303
templates, 199, 318
tenant / tenet, 546
tense, 547–49, 575. *See also* verbs; voice
ESL tips for, 174–75, 549
helping verbs and, 574
for infinitives, 571
in narration, 357
shifts in, avoiding, 549, 575
testing. *See* usability testing
test reports, 550
for research, 479
sample of, 551
text. *See* body
text messaging, 517, 550
professionalism and, 550
than / as, and pronoun case, 67, 68
thank-you notes, 286
that
with indirect quotations, 463, 465–66
with *one of those . . .* , 375–76
as pronoun, 426–27
for restrictive clauses, 490
that / those
and agreement in number, 16, 28, 31–32
as demonstrative adjectives, 16, 426–27
that / where, 585
that / which / who, 28, 550, 552
the, 16, 43–44
then. See conjunctive adverbs
there, as expletive, 184–85, 522, 552
there / their / they're, 552
therefore. See conjunctive adverbs
thesaurus, 541, 552–53
they / them / their / theirs, 65–69, 394–95, 426–29
third person, 394–95
antecedents and, 430
in narration, 357
point of view, 405–6
this / these
and agreement in number, 16, 31–32
as demonstrative adjectives, 16, 426–27
pronoun references with, 425–26, 426–27
thumbnails, in page design, 317
thus. See conjunctive adverbs
time
in global communication, 279–80
numbers for, 372
title page
in formal reports, 200, 205
in grant proposals, 239
in sales proposals, 441
sample of, 205
titles, 553–55. *See also* names and titles
capitalization of, 64, 554
colons in, 78
in headers or footers, 251–52, 315
italics for, 294, 554
for memos, e-mails, and Internet postings, 554
for newsletter articles, 361
question marks in, 456
quotation marks for, 294, 464, 555
for reports, 200, 205, 553
rhetorical questions in, 510, 553
setting tone with, 553, 556
special cases, 555
subject-verb agreement with, 29
to
in prepositional phrases, 400
as sign of infinitive, 400, 571–72, 574
to / too / two, 555

tone, 556
in abstracts, 7
for adjustment letters, 19
for complaint letters, 90
context and, 102
for correspondence, 106–7
for e-mail, 556
goodwill and, 107–8
for memos, 556
for refusal letters, 471
for reports, 556
for technical documents, 544
of titles, 553, 556
for trouble reports, 566
writer's checklist for, 108–9
"you" viewpoint and, 596
topic outlines, 381, 387
topic sentences, 385–86
paragraph unity and, 388
placement of, 386
topics
in headers or footers, 251, 315
in headings, 252, 254
in indexes, 261
track changes, 75–76, 510
trade journal articles, 556–60
abstracts for, 7–9
ethics in writing and, 558
literature reviews in, 327–29, 558
manuscript preparation, 560
publication clearance for, 560
research for, 558
sections of, 559–60
trade journals, job listings in, 302–3
training manuals, 332–33
training requirements, in sales proposals, 441
sample of, 450
trains, italics for names of, 294
transition, 561–63
between paragraphs, 562–63
between sentences, 561–62
for clarity, 73
for coherence, 75, 388
commas with, 82
conjunctions as, 99
enumeration for, 388, 561, 562
methods of, 561
in narration, 357
in presentations, 415
in process explanations, 422
for quotations, 467
repetition for, 473, 561
semicolons with, 520
telegraphic style and, 546
unity and, 567
for Web content, 592
words and phrases for, 561
transitive verbs, 374, 573
transmittals. *See* cover letters (or transmittals)
transparencies, overhead, 416
trip reports, 563
chronological order for, 71
sample of, 564
trouble reports, 563–66
chronological order for, 71
ethics in writing and, 566
sample of, 358, 565
try to, 566
tutorials
manuals as, 332
online and video, 14
Twitter, and job search, 301–2
two / to / too, 555
type / sort / kind, 16, 31–32
typographical errors, 431, 510
typography, 313–15
for brochures, 60
for e-mail, 166
for emphasis, 171, 314–15
ethics in writing and, 181
for presentation visuals, 418
for résumés, 507–8
typeface and type size, 314
for warnings, 270
in Web design, 593

unabridged dictionaries, 127
underlining
for emphasis, 171
for italics, 292, 294
understatement, 193
uninterested / disinterested, 129
unique / perfect / equal, 179
unity, 567
in paragraphs, 388
transitions and, 563

unknown authors
APA documentation of, 137
IEEE documentation of, 143, 144
MLA documentation of, 150
unpublished data, APA documentation of, 139
unsolicited proposals, 440
up, 411, 567
upon / *on* / *onto*, 375
uppercase. *See* all-capital letters
URLs
APA documentation of, 137
hyphens in, 257
IEEE documentation of, 143
slashes in, 531
us / *our* / *ours*, 65–69, 394–95, 426–29
usability engineering, 567n
usability testing, 567–69
for forms, 223
for global graphics, 235
for instructions, 271, 273
for manuals, 335
usage, 569
clarity and, 73
grammar and, 237
user-centered design, 567n
user manuals, 14, 332
utilize, 569

vague words, 570
clichés as, 74
as gobbledygook, 236
and word choice, 590
vendor description and qualifications
in requests for proposals, 477–78
in sales proposals, 442
sample of, 452
verbals, 570–72
ESL tips for, 173–74
gerunds, 570–71
infinitives, 571–72
as nonfinite verbs, 574
participles, 572
in sentence fragments, 527
verbs, 573–76. *See also* mood; subject-verb agreement; tense; voice
action, 67, 506
as adjectives, 18, 528
agreement with subject, 26–30, 574–75
conjugation of, 576
finite and nonfinite, 574
forms of, 574
in idioms, 411
intransitive, 310, 573–74
linking, 573–74
missing, 527
mood of, 354–55
phrases as, 398, 401
plurals of, 370
as predicates, 523
properties of, 574
tense of, 547–49
transitive, 374, 573
types of, 573–74
voice of, 581–83
weak, 364
very, 576
via, 576
video tutorials, 14
videoconferencing, 342, 518
videos
APA documentation of, 138
IEEE documentation of, 144
MLA documentation of, 151
visual logic, in page design, 315
visuals, 576–81. *See also* labels; numbering
APA documentation of, 139
boxes for, 317
in brochures, 58
captions for, 317, 398
copyright and, 155, 157, 398, 580
for description, 125
distortion in, 244, 577
drawings, 156–60, 578
ethics in writing and, 398, 577, 580
flowcharts, 195–97, 579
for global communication, 233–35
graphs, 243–50, 578–79
guidelines for selecting, 578–79
icons, 316–17, 579
indexing, 261
for instructions, 156–60, 270
integrating with text, 577, 580
in layout and design, 316–17

list of figures and tables, 200–201, 581
for manuals, 333, 336
maps, 336–38, 578
MLA documentation of, 151–52
for newsletters, 361, 363
organizational charts, 380, 579
outlining and, 379, 382, 580
permission for using, 155
photographs, 397–98, 578
for presentations, 416–17
professionalism and, 234
source lines for, 249, 543, 580
in spatial method of development, 533–34
symbols, 579
tables, 542–44, 578
in technical documents, 545
in trade journal articles, 559, 560
types of, 577
for Web design, 593
in white papers, 588
writer's checklist for, 580–81
voice, 576, 581–84. *See also* active voice; passive voice
active, 581–83
ESL tips for, 584
ethics in writing and, 583
helping verbs and, 574
passive, 583–84
in presentations, 420, 421
shifts in, avoiding 575
voice mail, 517
volunteer work
and job search, 299–300
on résumés, 502

wait for / wait on, 585
warnings
exclamation marks for, 183
in instructions, 183, 270–71
italics for, 315
in manuals, 336
sample of, 272
was / were, 354–55
we
in technical writing style, 406
us / our / ours, 65–69, 394–95, 426–29
weak verbs, 364. *See also* nominalizations; voice
Web addresses. *See* URLs
Web conferencing, 518
Web content-management systems, 100
Web design. *See also* layout and design; writing for the Web
for forms, 221–26
headings for, 592
icons, 316–17
links in, 593, 594
lists for, 592
posting documents, 594
for résumés, 507–8
typography for, 314, 593
usability testing for, 567–69
Web forums. *See* blogs and forums
Web logs. *See* blogs and forums
Web research. *See* Internet research
Web sites. *See also* blogs and forums; Internet research; writing for the Web
APA documentation of, 137–38
copyright and, 104–5
currency of, 480
evaluating, 485–86, 594
FAQs on, 186–88
functions of, 518
IEEE documentation of, 143–44
indexes for, 261
as information sources, 283, 480
internal and external, 53
italics for titles of, 554
MLA documentation of, 150
résumés on, 301, 507–8
white papers on, 586
well / good, 237
were / was, 354–55
when / where / that, 585
when and if, 585
where / that, 585
where . . . at, 585
whether, 585–86
whether . . . or, 99
which
for nonrestrictive clauses, 490, 550, 552
as pronoun, 427

which (*continued*)
subject-verb agreement with, 29
vs. *who / that*, 29, 550, 552
while, 586
white papers, 586–88
ethics in writing and, 588
layout and design for, 588
persuasion in, 586–87
sections in, 587–88
white space, in page design, 316, 318. *See also* spacing
whiteboards, 416
who
with *one of those . . .* , 375–76
who / that / which, 29, 427, 550, 552
who / whom, 427, 589
whole-by-whole method of comparison, 88
who's / whose / of which, 589
widows, 316
Wikipedia
copyright and, 105, 402
as information source, 482
wikis
APA documentation of, 138
for collaborative writing, 75–76
MLA documentation of, 150
will / shall, 531, 548
-wise, 589
with regard to / regarding, 472–73
word choice, 590
abstract / concrete words, 6–7
in adjustment letters, 21
affectation and, 25
ambiguity and, 36
buzzwords, 60–61
clichés, 74
colloquialisms, 175–76
connotation / denotation and, 99
deceptive language and, 180–81
dictionaries for, 126–28, 590
ethics in writing and, 180–81
figures of speech, 192–94
for global communication, 275, 279
gobbledygook, 236
idioms, 258
jargon, 296
localisms, 176
malapropisms, 332
outdated words, 25
slang, 176
standard vs. nonstandard English, 175–76
thesaurus for, 552–53
tone and, 556
usage conventions and, 237, 569
vague words, 570
word divisions, hyphens in, 257
word meanings. *See also* definitions
capitalization and, 62
connotation / denotation in, 99
dictionaries for, 126–28
word order. *See also* sentence construction
emphasis and, 524–25
and sentence variety, 529
subject-verb-object pattern, 522, 524–25
syntax, 541
word-processing software. *See* adapting to new technologies; digital tips
wordiness. *See also* conciseness
as affectation, 25
causes of, 93–94
as gobbledygook, 236
of passive voice, 95, 582
rambling sentences, 526–27
that and, 552
words used as words
italics for, 295
plurals of, 37
work plan, in sales proposals, 441
workscope description, in requests for proposals, 477
works-cited list (MLA), 133. *See also* documenting sources; MLA documentation
documentation models for, 148–52
in formal reports, 202, 220
in grant proposals, 240
samples of, 154, 220
in trade journal articles, 560
writer's checklists
abbreviations, 3
awkwardness, eliminating, 48
brochures, 59–60
collaborative writing, 77
conciseness, 94–95

correspondence, 108–9, 113–14
drawings, 159
e-mail, 165, 168–69
ethics in writing, 181–82
evaluating sources, 485–86
executive summaries, 184
FAQs (Frequently Asked Questions), 188
global communication, 232–33
goodwill, establishing, 108–9
grant proposals, 242
graphs, 249–50
headings, 254
hyphens, 257
indexing, 263
instant messaging, 268
instructions, 273
international correspondence, 279–80
interviewing for information, 281
job applications, 307
job descriptions, 298
lists, 327
manuals, 335–36
maps, 336–37
meetings, 345–46
minutes of meetings, 351
netiquette, 165
newsletter articles, 361
note-taking, 366–67
plain language, 404
preparation, 410
presentations, 418, 421
proofreading, 432
proposals, 435
questionnaires, 462–63
research, 484, 485–86
revision, 509–10
style, 538
tone, 108–9
visuals, 580–81
word division, 257
writing a draft, 591
writing process, xxiii–xxiv
writing a draft, 591. *See also* writing process
collaborative writing and, 76–77
conclusions, xxi, 96–98
introductions, xxi, 287–92
outlining, xx–xxi, 380–83
visuals and, 577, 580
writer's checklist for, xxiii–xxiv, 591
writing block, in forms, 225
sample of, 226
writing for the Web, 592–95. *See also* blogs and forums; Web design
ethics in writing and, 594
technology for, 595
writing line, in forms, 225
writing process
drafting, xxi, 591
organization, xx–xxi, 379
preparation, xvi–xix, 409–10
research, xix–xx, 479–87
reviewing, xxii, 77, 178–79
revision, xxi–xxii, 508–10
steps to success in, xv–xxii
writer's checklist for, xxiii–xxiv
writing style. *See* technical writing style; style

years. *See* dates
yes, comma with, 81
"you" viewpoint, 596
audience and, 46
in correspondence, 107–8
in FAQs, 188
in persuasive writing, 395
in white papers, 586–87
you / your / yours, 65–69, 394–95, 426–29
your / you're, 597

Commonly Misused Words and Phrases

A
a / an 1
a lot 2
above 6
absolutely 6
accept / except 9
accuracy / precision 11
activate / actuate 12
ad hoc 12
adapt / adept / adopt 13
affect / effect 24
affinity 26
all ready / already 32
all right 33
all together / altogether 33
allude / elude / refer 33
allusion / illusion 33
almost / most 34
also 34
amount / number 36
and/or 36
as / because / since 44
as much as / more than 45
as such 45
as well as 45
augment / supplement 47
average / median / mean 47
awhile / a while 47

B
bad / badly 49
be sure to 49
beside / besides 49
between / among 49
between you and me 50
bi- / semi- 50
biannual / biennial 50
both . . . and 54

C
can / may 62
cannot 62
center on 71
cite / sight / site 71
compare / contrast 87
complement / compliment 91
compose / constitute / comprise 92
consensus 99
continual / continuous 103
credible / creditable 114
criteria / criterion 115
critique 115

D
data 118
defective / deficient 119
definite / definitive 120
despite / in spite of 125
diagnosis / prognosis 126
differ from / differ with 128
different from / different than 128
discreet / discrete 129
disinterested / uninterested 129
due to / because of 161

E
each 162
economic / economical 162
e.g. / i.e. 162
equal / unique / perfect 179
etc. 179
everybody / everyone 183
explicit / implicit 185

F
fact 186
female / male 191
few / a few 191
fewer / less 192
figuratively / literally 192
fine 194
first / firstly 194
flammable / inflammable / nonflammable 194
forceful / forcible 197
foreword / forward 198
former / latter 221

G
good / well 237

uploaded by [stormrg]

H
he / she 251

I
illegal / illicit 259
imply / infer 259
in / into 259
in order to 259
in terms of 260
indiscreet / indiscrete 263
inside / inside of 266
insoluble / insolvable 266
insure / ensure / assure 273
interface 274
its / it's 295

K
kind of / sort of 309
know-how 309

L
lay / lie 310
lend / loan 317
like / as 324
loose / lose 331

M
maybe / may be 340
media / medium 340
Ms. / Miss / Mrs. 355
mutual / common 356

N
nature 359
needless to say 359
none 364
nor / or 365

O
OK / okay 374
on / onto / upon 375
one 375
one of those . . . who 375
only 376
outside [of] 383
over [with] 384

P
party 392
per 392
percent / percentage 393
phenomenon / phenomena 397
principal / principle 421
pseudo- / quasi- 454

Q
quid pro quo 463

R
raise / rise 468
really 468
reason is [because] 468
regarding / with regard to 472
regardless 473
respective / respectively 489

S
service 530
set / sit 530
shall / will 531
so / so that / such 532
some / somewhat 532
some time / sometime / sometimes 532
strata / stratum 535

T
tenant / tenet 546
that / which / who 550
there / their / they're 552
to / too / two 555
try to 566

U
up 567
utilize 569

V
very 576
via 576

W
wait for / wait on 585
when / where / that 585
whether 585
while 586
who / whom 589
who's / whose / of which 589
-wise 589

Y
your / you're 597

Model Documents and Figures by Topic

Use the following list as a quick reference for finding selected samples of technical writing and visuals by topic. See also the complete Contents by Topic on the inside front cover of this book. For additional model documents, see the companion Web site at *bedfordstmartins.com/alred*.

Technical Writing Documents and Elements

A–2 Informative Abstract (for an Article) 8
B–2 Brochure (Cover Panel) 58
B–3 Brochure (Inside Panels of Brochure in Figure B–2) 59
F–1 Feasibility Report 189
F–5 Formal Report 204
I–5 Illustrated Instructions 271
I–6 Warning in a Set of Instructions 272
I–10 Investigative Report 293
J–1 Job Description 297
L–1 Laboratory Report 311
L–8 Literature Review 328
N–2 Newsletter Article 360
N–3 Company Newsletter (Front Page) 362
P–4 Progress Report (Using Letter Format) 423
P–5 Activity Report (Using Printed Memo) 424
P–7 Special-Purpose Internal Proposal 437
P–8 Sales Proposal 443
Q–1 Questionnaire 459
T–4 Test Report 551
T–5 Trip Report Sent as E-mail (with Attachment) 564
T–6 Trouble Report (Using Printed Memo) 565

Design and Visuals

D–13 Schematic Diagram of Particulate Removal Process 160
F–2 Flowchart Using Labeled Blocks (Depicting Electric Utility Power Restoration Process) 195
F–3 Flowchart Using Pictorial Symbols 196
F–4 Common ISO Flowchart Symbols (with Annotations) 196
F–6 Form (for a Medical Claim) 222
F–7 Online Form with Typical Components 223
G–3 Graphics for U.S. and Global Audiences 234
G–4 International Organization for Standardization (ISO) Symbols 234
G–5 Double-Line Graph (with Shading) 243
G–6 Distorted and Distortion-Free Expressions of Data 244
G–7 Bar Graph (Quantities of Different Items During a Fixed Period) 245
G–8 Bar (Column) Graph (Showing the Parts That Make Up the Whole) 245
G–9 Gantt Chart Showing Project Schedule 247
G–10 Pie Graph (Showing Percentages of the Whole) 248
G–11 Picture Graph 248
H–2 Headings Used in a Document 253
M–1 Map 337
T–1 Elements of a Table 543
V–1 Chart for Choosing Appropriate Visuals 578

Correspondence

A–5 Acknowledgment 12
A–6 Adjustment Letter (When Company Is at Fault) 20
A–7 Partial Adjustment (Accompanying a Product) 21
C–6 Complaint Letter 91
C–8 A Poor Bad-News Message 110
C–9 A Courteous Bad-News Message 110

C–10 A Good-News Message 111
C–11 Cover Message 115
I–2 Inquiry 264
I–3 Response to an Inquiry 265
I–7 Inappropriate International Correspondence (Draft Marked for Revision) 276
I–8 Appropriate International Correspondence 277
L–4 Full-Block-Style Letter (with Letterhead) 319
L–5 Modified-Block-Style Letter (without Letterhead) 320
M–4 Typical Memo Format (Printed with Sender's Handwritten Initials) 347
R–1 Reference Letter (Printed on Letterhead Stationery) 469
R–2 Refusal Letter (Sent as E-mail) 471

Job Search and Application

A–3 Acceptance Letter (for Employment) 10
A–4 Refusal Letter (for Employment) 11
A–8 Application Cover Letter Sent as E-mail (College Student Applying for an Internship) 39
A–9 Application Cover Letter (Recent Graduate Applying for a Graphic Design Job) 40
A–10 Application Cover Letter (Applicant with Years of Experience) 41
I–9 Follow-up Correspondence 286
J–2 Sections from a Job-Application Form 305
R–3 Resignation Letter (to Accept a Better Position) 487
R–4 Resignation Memo (Under Negative Conditions) 488
R–5 Student Résumé (for an Entry-Level Position) 493
R–6 Résumé (Highlighting Professional Credentials) 494
R–7 Student Résumé (for a Graphic Design Job) 495
R–8 Résumé (Applicant with Management Experience) 496
R–9 Résumé (Experienced Applicant Seeking Career Change) 497
R–10 Advanced Résumé (Showing Promotion Within a Single Company) 498
R–11 Advanced Résumé (Combining Functional and Chronological Elements) 499

Presentations and Meetings

M–2 Meeting Agenda 342
M–3 E-mail to Accompany an Agenda 344
M–6 Minutes of a Meeting (Partial Section) 350
P–3 Slides for a Presentation 417

Research and Documentation

D–4 APA Sample Page from Report 140
D–5 APA Sample List of References 141
D–6 IEEE Sample Page from Report 146
D–7 IEEE Sample Bibliography 147
D–8 MLA Sample Page from Report 153
D–9 MLA Sample List of Works Cited 154
Q–1 Questionnaire 459
Q–2 Long Quotation (APA Style) 467

Organization, Writing, and Revision

C–2 Chronological Method of Development 72
G–1 General-to-Specific Method of Development 230
G–2 Specific-to-General Method of Development 231
N–1 Narration from an Accident Report 358
O–1 Decreasing Order-of-Importance Method of Development 377
O–2 Increasing Order-of-Importance Method of Development 378
P–1 Persuasive Memo 396
S–1 Spatial Description with Precise Measurements 533